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NOBILITY OF LIFE.



'WHO BEST CAN SUFFER, BEST CAN DO.'

MILTON.

The Victoria Reign is unparalleled in the History of Great Empires for its Purity, Goodness, and Greatness!!!

WHAT ALONE ENABLES US TO DRAW A JUST MORAL FROM THE TALE OF LIFE ?

'Were I asked what best dignifies the present and consecrates the past; what alone enables us to draw a just moral from the TALE of Life; what sheds the PUREST LIGHT UPON OUR REASON; what gives the firmest strength to our religion; what is best fitted to SOFTEN THE HEART of man and elevate his soul—I would answer, with Lassus, it is "EXPERIENCE."—LORD LYTTON.

QUEEN'S HEAD HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE :
J. C. ENO, Esq. June 4, 1897.

SIR.—Will you to-day allow me to present you with this TESTIMONIAL and POEM on your justly celebrated FRUIT SALT? Being the Writer for several first-class London Magazines, and my occupation being a very sedentary one, I came here for a few weeks in order to see what change of air would do for me, and, at the wish of some personal friends of mine here, I have taken your FRUIT SALT, and the good results accruing therefrom have been my reason for addressing you.

I am, Sir, yours truly, A LADY.

As sunshine on fair Nature's face,
Which dearly do we love to trace ;
As welcome as the flowers in May,
That bloom around us on their way ;
As welcome as the wild bird's song,
Which greets us as we go along ;
As welcome as the flowers' perfume,
That scents the air in sweet array ;
Is Eno's famous Fruit Salt!

Cool and refreshing as the breeze,
To Headache it gives certain ease ;
Billiousness—it does assuage,
And cures it both in Youth and Age ;
Giddiness it will arrest,
And give both confidence and rest ;
Thirst it will at once allay,
And what the best in every way.
Why, Eno's famous Fruit Salt!

The Appetite it will enforce,
And help the system in its course ;
Perhaps you've ate or drunk too much,
It will restore like magic touch.
Depression with its fearful sway,
It drives electric-like away ;
And if the Blood is found impure,
What effects it perfect cure,
Why, Eno's famous Fruit Salt!

Free from danger, free from harm,
It acts like some medicine's charm :
At any time a dainty draught,
Which wil dispel disease's shaft ;
More priceless than the richest gold,
That ever did its wealth unfold ;
And all throughout our native land
Should alway have at their command
Eno's famous Fruit Salt!

SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHER SALINES.—Dear Sir,—Having been in the habit of taking your "FRUIT SALT" for many years, I think it only right to tell you that I consider it a most invaluable medicine, and far superior to all other saline mixtures I have ever tried. I am never without a bottle of it in the house, as I find it possesses three most desirable qualities—namely, it is pleasant to the taste, promptly efficacious, and leaves no unpleasant after-effects. I do not wish my name to appear, but apart from the publication of that you are welcome to make use of this testimonial if it is of service.—A DEVONSHIRE LADY.—Jan. 25, 1889.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JULY 1889.

The Bell of St. Paul's.

BY WALTER BESANT.

PART II.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOOD-BYE, SWEETHEART.

WHEN Laurence heard those words and saw the triumphant face of the successful wooer, he fled. He ran away. We are so far still children of nature that we cannot always suddenly force ourselves to preserve outward calmness, whatever happens. Still it would have been better had he waited. Then he would have heard the modifications of that boastful announcement. But he fled. He did not dare to look at Althea. He broke away—*evasit—erupit*—he vanished.

This, then, was the end: a rude awakening: for this, he had gone on day after day, every day, sometimes all day long, thinking no danger, lulled and lapped in security, enjoying the sweet companionship of this girl. To be sure, not one word of love had been exchanged: yet he had fallen into a dreamy safety.—Why not? This girl had no lovers: she knew no other young man, except Oliver, and as regards that young man, Laurence felt no jealousy: why should he? Oliver, who seldom came to the house, was a kind of brother. Besides, he knew very well—any man would find this out for himself—that the girl regarded him with friendly eyes if not with the favour which he desired. There was no hurry. Even to be engaged to her would bring him little

more than the privilege which he already enjoyed, of gazing upon her, worshipping her, and speaking freely and openly with her about every other subject. Nay, until this day he knew not the depth and devoutness of his worship. When he understood this, he learned also that the discovery came too late. His castle was of Spanish architecture—or it was a castle of cards—and at a touch it fell, tumbling about his ears. Therefore he fled.

He did not, at first, go far. When the residents of Bank Side feel happy and the weather is fine and the evenings light, they stand beside the river and look across and up or down. When they are crushed they carry their wounded spirits to the same spot and seek sympathy of silver-footed Thamesis, sweet Thames, running softly, great Father of the British Floods.

What did Cassie in her great trouble? She crept out alone at night and wept over the river thinking that no one would find her there. 'Twas a leading case. Laurence did the same. That is, he did not weep, but he leaned over the wall and resigned his soul to bitterness. Althea was lost—he had thrown away by his own folly—by his procrastination—such a chance as never came to any man before. By his own miserable folly, he thought, Althea was lost to him. The evening should have been black and thunderous: it was a fine evening after a splendid day: the air was balmy; no night, but a soft twilight, hanging over the city which deepened the shadows and softened the outlines and filled all happy mortals with a sense of repose. There is this strange quality about Nature that when her mood fits our own we take it as sympathetic and kindly intentioned in her: and when her mood is not ours, we are not irritated therefor, but we take no notice at all of her. That she rejoices with us fills our hearts with gladness: that she will not weep with us offends us not.

Althea was engaged. Therefore, Laurence had no perception or sense of beauty in the river under the soft twilight. She was engaged to the man who had no illusions. Love? How could such a man love such a woman? Oh! most unhappy girl—what would be her fate with Oliver?—and oh! most unhappy lover! what his own without Althea? The water lapped the breezes softly and glowed in the evening light, but Laurence heeded it not.

There are many men whom we always, and instinctively, dislike from the very first: we do not invite them to enter our house: we do not willingly sit down to break bread with them: the dislike is a dull and smouldering fire: these men do not

actually give us pain by their presence or their existence until something happens which kindles the smouldering embers into flames. Then, dull dislike flares out into burning hate. Just so this young man's dislike of his fortunate rival was now changed into a most active and lively hatred.

When one is in very great trouble and misery : when one is sick and knows not what may be coming next : when one is much harassed by work the mind assumes a curious habit of seeing and dwelling upon trifles. For instance, Laurence presently discovered that he had turned his back upon the river and was now gazing across the road. Through the open window he saw his cousins assembled. Cornelia, he observed, sat with her hands in her lap, as if she was still sitting in her chair at the Church door—it is complained of all ecclesiastics that they cannot shake their calling out of their looks, their garb, and their manners. This reverend lady sat every evening thus bolt upright, without book or work, as she sat all day. An austere, if dignified, manner of life. Her brother sat opposite her, reading the evening paper. It was the *Globe* which he generally brought home with him and he read it right through, thoughtfully, as much interested in one country as in another and in one subject as another. This catholic spirit he inherited from his father, for the Principal of an Academy should know everything. In one window Flavia trimmed a hat, holding it up to the light, turning it round. She was not clever at work and would fain have sought assistance of Cassie, whose genius lay in millinery. But Cassie sat in the other window silent, sad, and heavy-eyed.

While he gazed upon the group Cassie turned her head and saw him. Then she rose and went out to him, carrying her hat by the strings.

‘What is the matter, Mr. Waller?’ she asked.

‘What should be the matter, Cass?’ he replied clearing his throat with a show of cheerfulness.

‘Something is wrong. I saw it from the window. What is it? I hear it in your voice. Is it—is it—anything to do with Althea?’

‘I am out here to breathe the night air. It is a fine night, is it not? I like the river best when the tide is nearly at its full. Then the water is freshest and the wind seems to come straight up from the German Ocean, doesn’t it?’

‘Mr. Waller.’

‘Oh, you asked me if anything had happened. Well, nothing

that we could not expect—I forgot, you see, that I am a stranger and they have been together from childhood and the two old men want it so very much. But it is nothing to me. How should it be? I have only been here six weeks or so. Pity I did not suspect it—but how should I?’

‘What is it, then?’

‘It doesn’t matter to you either, since that business is all over with you. You have left off lamenting the scoundrel who——’

‘Mr. Waller.’

‘And now he has told the same tale to the girl whom——’

‘To Althea?’

‘Of course. And they are engaged. That is what I have just learned.’

‘Althea! Oh! I never thought—I could not think that Althea—of all women in the world—Althea——’

‘Don’t blame her—Cassie, child—don’t blame her,’ said Laurence, hoarsely. ‘I cannot bear that the least blame——’

‘I am not blaming her at all. Oh! Mr. Waller, I blame myself. For she came and implored me to tell if there was anything—anything at all—between Oliver and me—she wanted to know why I was so unhappy. It was all her love and kindness. And I declared that there was nothing and never had been anything. I told her that falsehood—again and again.’

‘Poor child,’ said Laurence.

‘Oh! I am a wretch. If I had only told her the truth this would never have happened. But I was ashamed. And now I have made you miserable too.’

‘You have made Althea miserable, Cassie. Never mind me. She will be miserable for life.’

‘How can she be unhappy if she loves him and if he loves her?’

‘But she cannot love him. It is impossible.’

‘You do not know him, Mr. Waller,’ said the girl. ‘You think of him hardly because he has—made a mistake—about me—he thought he loved me, you see, and he did not. But of course he loves Althea—any man would—and he is so clever and so bright that any girl would easily be led on to love him, especially if she were led on as he led me on.’

‘I think I know him even better than you, and I assure you, Cassie, he is not a man to be led away by any fancies.’ Here, it will be observed, Laurence made the not unnatural mistake of taking a man at his own professions. Oliver declared that love

was an illusion. Did it follow that he was never to fall into that sweet illusion. 'He does not love Althea and he never loved you. He loves himself—his own wretched self.'

'Well—but you did love her. And oh! Mr. Waller, why did you not tell her so?'

'I thought she knew it.'

'How could she know it for certain unless you tell her? Why, think, Mr. Waller. If a girl make such a mistake as that, how wretched she may be—look at me. Besides, Althea never talked or thought of such things. She isn't like other girls who are always talking about love. Oh! how could you go on so long and never speak a word?'

'I have been a fool, Cassie. And I have lost her—and yet—I cannot understand—'

'Perhaps her father—'

'Yes—yes—her father and the Doctor wished it. That is the only explanation. But does that explain why he should—he paused. 'Unless perhaps he was found out.'

'What is there to find out?'

'There is a little fact which the Doctor and Mr. Indagine have kept to themselves. But I know it. I think it explains our friend's sudden change—well, Cassie, it is no longer any concern of mine. I must try and forget her. The story is finished, I suppose—I must go away home again. Perhaps, after a bit, I shall forget. The story is finished. What a pity! What an ending! Now if I were to write that story I would end it so differently.'

'How would you end it?'

'I would turn Althea's heart to the man who does love her. And as for you, Cass, I would harden your heart to the man who has deceived you, and I would make you gay and light-hearted once more—and bring along a prince for you.'

'Oh,' she murmured. 'That can never be. But oh, Mr. Waller, I am so sorry for you—oh! so very very sorry. You brought us all such happiness, and now it is all gone, and you are only made miserable. Oh I am sorry you ever came here.'

Laurence laid his hand upon the shapely head—it is the action of a brother—and sighed.

'Don't cry, dear girl,' he said, after a while. 'Don't cry, Cass. It is all over and done with. But we are always friends, whatever happens. You have lost—I have lost—we have both lost. We

conjugate the past tense of the verb to lose. We are all the more friends over our common loss.'

She gave him her hand, without more words, and left him.

He stayed on the Bank long after the lights in the house were put out and the residents of the Academy had gone to bed; after the trains had ceased to run in and out of Cannon Street; till the silence of night had fallen upon the great City and its river. The silence falls about one o'clock and it ceases—London Silence being like the Summer of Labrador—exactly an hour later, at two of the clock, when the market carts begin to rumble through the street. Finally, in great dejection and with the most bitter self-reproaches, he went up to his own room and so to bed.

It is an aggravation of misery that one must always undress, go to bed, get up and dress again, whatever the condition of mind. For a woman it is worse than for a man. Fancy a poor forlorn maiden, whose lover has left her, having to choose her frock and her ribbons, just as if she was going once more to meet him, to walk among the dewy meadows, to gather the wild rose, and to hear the blithe song of the lark, her hand in his—Poor child! She is left forlorn: and she has got to do her hair prettily just the same.

Laurence went to bed and instantly fell fast asleep. But he awoke with the weight and suffocation of a horrid nightmare which sat upon his chest and choked him. It took the form of Althea—to think that Althea, so fair, so calm, so sweet, should become a nightmare. It was in this way. He saw himself just as usual rowing with Althea, walking with her, sitting beside her, talking to her father while she sat listening or playing to them. Always Althea met his gaze of overpowering love with the same calm unconsciousness, as if there were no such thing at all as love, as if she had never heard of love. And yet when she got out of the boat, or when their walk was finished, or while they still sat talking, Oliver came in and Althea suffered him to stand on tiptoe in order to kiss her. This kiss was the nightmare: and it continued after he awoke: it became a thought so full of torture that he could no longer lie in bed.

He pulled back the curtains. It was half-past four: the sun was already rising—but he had no eye for the glory of that phenomenon: besides, Cannon Street Railway Bridge spoils the sunrise for Bank Side. He threw open the window and breathed the sweet morning air: the river ran bright and sparkling under the blue sky, crisped by the fresh breeze: the spires and steeples

rose clearly outlined : the Cathedral showed every column and every window sharply defined. On the Bank there lounged slowly, because he had no bed and was hungry and on the prowl for what he could pick up, an unclean bird of night, who saw with envy all those barges lying unguarded, actually waiting to be stolen, and remembered with regret that there was not a single fence in the whole of London where he could place a barge if he should fake it. So he crept on his way.

Laurence watched him with interest. The sight of the poor wretch diverted his thoughts. When he had disappeared they returned to the old subject. He could not go on as if nothing had happened. What should he do, then ?

In some cases there is only one thing to do—namely, to run away. I am always surprised that more people do not run away. There are lots of retreats and refuges for runaways—with nice casual wards in case they have got through their money. And it is a remedy so truly efficacious. You can go right away, where the wicked cease from troubling : where the importunate creditor cannot find you : where the woman you loved and have lost cannot torment you with the sight of her happy face—not that you would wish to see it miserable : where you will read no more nasty ones on your last failure : where the weary take off their boots and are at rest—who would not wish for such a place of repose, such a haven of refuge ? Some men, however, stay on : they meanly stick to their business : they meet the assaults of the wicked with fists and sticks : they compass revenge : in love matters they wait—they actually wait—until by the help of time, and the pricks and stabs of other worries, they can get over it. It is true they always do get over it. But how much better to have run away.

Laurence resolved to run away. ‘The story is told,’ he said. ‘I, who thought to play the principal part, am out of it altogether. I can go, now. I will put the river and a great many streets between Althea and myself. I will even’—he sighed heavily—‘I will put the ocean between us. I will go away this very morning.’

You cannot go away anywhere at half-past five in the morning, especially from Bank Side where there are no cabs. The love-sick young man was therefore constrained to go to bed again. Such is the flatness of things. The most dramatic incidents in life have to be interrupted by the small necessities of packing, getting the luggage out of the house, eating,

paying bills, and seeing that you have got small change for the journey.

Laurence, however, his mind once made up, went back to bed and fell instantly asleep and had no more nightmares.

In the evening, when the various members of the family returned, they received the following report from Sempronius.

The boy deposed that he was reading when Mr. Waller came downstairs about half-past nine. He was looking grumpy: but he said nothing: he rang the bell for breakfast and walked to the window where he stood looking out with his hands in his pockets. He was evidently very grumpy. When breakfast came he poured out a cup of tea, broke off the top of an egg, looked at it and pushed it away.

'The Selected at ten a shilling, too,' said Flavia. 'Shameful!'

'He took some bread and butter, drank his tea, and finished breakfast.

'Then,' the boy continued, 'he turned round to me and he said "Boy," says he, with his usual cheek, "you may tell your father I've had a business letter and I've got to leave unexpectedly. No, I'll write that—" So he went upstairs and came down presently with a letter which he put on the mantel-shelf. There it is.' The letter was certainly there in confirmation of this statement. 'Then he asked me if I would mind going as far as Blackfriars Station to get a Hansom Cab for him—which I did. He had got on his hat and his boots when I came back with the cab, and he'd packed up his portmanteau and got it downstairs. Well, he didn't laugh or make any joke or anything: but he pulled out his purse and he gave me a sovereign.—Here it is.' No doubt of it; there was the sovereign in evidence. 'And he said "Goodbye, boy, give the letter to your father," and with that he got into the cab and drove away.'

'Didn't he leave any message for Cassie and me?' asked Flavia.

'No, he didn't.'

'Nor any for Althea?'

'No—not any message for anybody. But he gave me a sovereign.'

'Then,' said Flavia with her usual sagacity, 'something must have happened.'

The letter being opened proved the truth of the boy's statement. Mr. Waller was actually gone in a manner as unexpected and as startling as he had come.

'Dear Mr. Cottle,' he said.

'I have to apologise for leaving you so hurriedly. An unexpected piece of news has obliged me to go away at once. I shall have to leave London and shall not be able to return for any stay with you before I go home to Sydney. But I hope to wish you farewell.

'Meanwhile I thank you all most sincerely for your great kindness to me, a complete stranger : I have completed the business which brought me to Bank Side : I can make no excuse for staying any longer. My stay has been one of very great pleasure throughout. Pray thank your sister and your daughters for all they have done for me. The inclosed will, I hope, relieve me of my pecuniary liabilities to you.'

'Very sincerely yours,

'LAURENCE WALLER.'

Lucius opened the cheque. 'He has paid for five weeks in advance,' he said. 'But he has gone ! Children, it is pleasant to receive a cheque for five weeks in advance. But we would rather have him back again.'

'Oh,' Flavia sighed, 'he is gone. But the cheque will come in handy. He is gone. Well, it is something to remember. For once in our lives we have known a man who isn't always hard up.'

Sempronius felt the sovereign in his pocket. There are possible consolations, even for the departure of a lodger and a friend. A whole sovereign ! But Cassie, who alone knew the secret of his departure, hung her head.

'My dears,' said Lucius, with troubled voice. 'The house seems empty without him. How shall we make up for his loss ? He has gone. Mr. Waller has left us. We repeat the words but we cannot understand them. We know that he is gone, but we are not yet sure of it. We are thus strikingly reminded of the mutability of all earthly things. They are fleeting : in fact they fleet in the most unexpected manner. We might have known that we could not keep him, and he would not keep us, always. Five and thirty shillings a week in addition was too good to last : and such a friend too great fortune for us : yet that he should go so soon, just as we had learned to trust and to esteem him.'

'And just,' said Flavia, 'as he was beginning to show an interest in Aunt Claudia.'

'I am thankful,' said the other aunt, 'to think that he has seen the Church. I showed him the carvings and the Body.'

'He enlivened us,' said Lucius. 'We laughed while he was here. Why, I think we had forgotten how to laugh. Let us now remember that cheerfulness is a duty: it is peculiar to man—and to the hyæna—to laugh. Mirthful moments give relief to the brain: it is good to be merry. And he told us stories. In his company, children, we have travelled. We have wandered over the plains of Australia: we have sailed across the Indian Ocean: we have steamed through the Suez Canal.'

'And now,' said Flavia, 'he has left us more dismal than we were before he came.'

'I dreamed,' said Cornelia, gloomily, 'it is a week ago, that the house was hung with black. A sure sign that some one would be taken.'

'Well, Aunt,' said Flavia, sharply, 'he isn't dead that we know of. And now you come to think about it—there was no letter for him this morning—where did he get the news which called him away? It hadn't come last night or he would have told us. How was he called away? No one came for him. There was no letter. It isn't like him to do things secretly. Something may have driven him away. It couldn't be any one in this house. Could it be Felix? I don't think so. What has happened, I wonder?'

'We do not know,' said her father. 'It is idle to seek. I repeat that we ourselves,' he looked at Cassie—'should take example of a cheerfulness which—'

'Here is Althea,' said Flavia. 'Althea, oh! he's gone. Mr. Waller gone.'

'Gone? Mr. Waller gone? Oh! why has he gone?'

Cassie looked up sharply. There was not the least sign of consciousness in Althea's face. If she knew, if she suspected, she must be the greatest actress that ever lived—to preserve a look of such complete and blank unconsciousness.

'We don't know,' Flavia replied. 'And we cannot understand. He is gone. That's all.'

'Gone without coming to see us? Why, my father is expecting him this evening. Oh! but he will return.'

'Perhaps,' he says, 'to bid us good-bye. That's all.'

'He has gone,' said Lucius. 'He has left a noble cheque. But I would rather he had stayed.'

'He has gone,' said Cassie, feebly. 'Something must have driven him away.'

'He gave me a sovereign,' said Sempronius. 'He wouldn't have done that if he was coming back again.'

'My father has got a poem to read to him,' said Althea. 'Oh! who will take Mr. Waller's place at home? Why did he go?'

'We do not know at all,' Flavia repeated. 'No letters came for him this morning and no messengers called. Yet he says that he has received news which oblige him to go away.'

'There may have been something in the morning paper, then,' said Althea. 'Something about his father, who is a great man out in Australia.'

'We never asked him about his father,' said Flavia.

'His father is the Prime Minister of New South Wales. His name is Sir David Waller. He told Oliver so.'

'Indeed?' Lucius looked up with revived interest. 'This is interesting. The son of Sir David—Sir—David—Waller. Dear me! This is most gratifying. Children, we have entertained the son of a nobleman. I thought—I always did think—that there was in his manner and appearance a something which only noble blood confers.'

'Well,' Althea laughed. 'I do not think there was much noble blood in Mr. Waller's descent.'

'Children,' Lucius continued. 'This is a great honour for us. Since the days when the nobility and aristocracy came here to witness the performance of Shakespeare's plays, the Bank has been deserted by the Great. Really—it is a memorable occasion in the Chronicles of the time-hallowed quarter. And in this house! In the Academy!'

At this point Cornelia suddenly jumped clean out of her chair as if some one had stuck a pin in her. One feels a kind of shame in recording so undignified a thing of the lady, but she did it, with a little cry.

'Sister!' said Lucius, in amazement.

Cornelia sat down again. 'I know now,' she cried breathlessly. 'I know why I recognised the voice directly I heard it. The voice and the eyes. Brother, are we blind? They are the eyes and the voice of my cousin Lucy.'

'Lucy, my dear Sister? But she went away long ago. She left Mr. Norbery and got married. It is thirty years ago. And this young man is the son of Sir David Waller, Sir—David—Waller—Prime Minister—actually—Prime Minister—of the Colony of New South Wales. Our cousin Lucy, if she lives still,

must be in—ahem!—humble circumstances. We were always—up to a certain point—kind to Lucy and her sister, but they were, remember, Cornelia, in a humble position, though our cousins.'

'Until Lucy became a snake in the grass,' said Cornelia. 'But for her, Mr. Norbery would, I believe——'

Her brother waved his hand. 'Until that time, then,' he said, with dignity, 'we were kind to Lucy and she was grateful. On Sunday she was always welcome to tea. We still wish her well in her present humble position, and in case of need we would again extend our protection. But, Cornelia——'

'He's got Lucy's voice and he's got Lucy's eyes. Stuff and rubbish about Sir David Waller and noblemen and Prime Ministers! Lucy's voice and Lucy's eyes!'

CHAPTER XIV.

IN TIME OF TEMPTATION.

MR. JOSEPH MAYES sat in his room at the back of his office. He was resting after the day's work. He had that day sold up a greengrocer, and kindly laid the foundation of ruin for a draper—in a manner which would have done credit to his predecessor. There was therefore a glow of satisfaction in his heart. He was now taking his well-earned pleasure. The fair goddess Pleasure assumes as many shapes as there be figures of mortal men. To every one of us she is our own veritable effigies engaged in doing continually the thing which at the time we love the most. This occupation she varies from age to age, but to millions of honest Britons she taketh the form of a middle-aged or elderly man sitting in an arm-chair with a pipe, a glass of cold without, and the evening paper. The first essential of pleasure is rest: the second, tobacco: the third, drink. All these may be combined with vacuity of mind. But when one gets to the intellectual level of Mr. Mayes, there must be food for the brain. Therefore, the evening paper. And, because of that intellectual level, it was the sprightliest, spiciest and, consequently, the most truthful of the halfpenny organs.

Mr. Mayes, therefore, rested. He was at peace with all mankind. The shallow observer doubts whether a money-lender can

be at peace with the world, and therefore his own conscience. Why not? He gets nothing but his bond—his legal rights. It is the business of the good tradesman to buy cheap and to sell dear: the money-lender lets out bags of gold on lease: he asks as big a rent as he can expect to get. He receives, instead of money down, a promise to pay. When he exacts the fulfilment of that promise, why should the debtor curse him, rage at him, and call him sweater, oppressor of the poor, and usurer? Whatever they called him, Mr. Mayes cared nothing. He was at peace with all the world. Though the greengrocer whom he had sold up was at that moment raging and gnashing his teeth, he felt no enmity towards that greengrocer. Not at all. He had seen so much of this passion, that he felt like a doctor in a hospital or a turnkey in a prison. But the unruffled calm of his soul was to be disturbed, and that in the most unexpected and the most bewildering manner. You shall hear.

In the room upstairs, where there were the pile of papers, the single chair and the table, sat beneath a gas-jet the Chevalier. He wore his flat cloth cap, and for convenience of reading, though in the day time he did not use them, he wore spectacles. He also had a pipe in his mouth, an old-fashioned German pipe with a big bowl. In his capacity as cook he had his stated hours, but in that of clerk he had none: it was therefore not unusual with him to spend his whole evenings in the room reading through the papers. Why not? He had nowhere else to go: his work was almost mechanical and caused no fatigue: he was as comfortable in that room as if he were wandering among the streets: alone with the papers he could think. Perhaps, as he turned over the pages and plodded through the deeds, looking for nothing but the name of Mr. Norbery, his mind went back to the old, old days before the fatal '48, when he danced and made love, feasted, gambled, drank, squandered and conspired, as lighthearted and as careless as any of his Magyar race. Perhaps he asked himself what had been the outcome of that year of Revolution, defeat, and bloodshed. Perhaps he remembered his own broad lands which had gone to the hands that in Hungary grasp all—those of the usurer—and smiled to think that he himself in his old age had gone the same way as his estates.

Who knoweth the thoughts of an old man? Too soon—too soon—we shall learn them for ourselves—the regrets, the memories, the heart-sinkings, the repentance that pass in endless procession through his brain. No old man has ever yet written of his

age : no old woman has ever yet attempted to arrest and set down on paper her flying thoughts—they are not all, I suppose, regrets, like those of the Belle Heaulmière, for her vanished beauty.

Ainsi le bon temps regrettions
Entre nous pauvres vieilles sottes.

Many old men write Reminiscences. They are not at all what we want. We have all been young : we all begin to store up our reminiscences as soon as we begin to have any memory at all : let us know what the old man thinks about as he sits in his leather chair beside the fire ; when the workers have gone forth to their toil and the room is quiet, while outside the sun falls upon spring blossoms and the lark sings in the sky, and the clock ticks in the corner, and the dog dreams on the hearth rug, and the ashes drop and the coal cracks in the grate.

The Chevalier made no haste : nor did he take rest : he plodded on, opening one paper, reading it and tossing it, if it did not contain the name of Mr. Norbery, into the right-hand corner. If it did, he laid it aside for further examination if necessary. But as yet he had chanced upon nothing of the least importance. They were the papers which showed the life work of two very industrious persons : yet they were now of not the least use to anybody. This, as Mr. Vicesimus Cottle might have observed, is the way of man. He toils and moils with a mighty fuss, mopping his brows and puffing and panting, and behold ! when he has been dead a year or two the whole of his work is useless and forgotten as much as the crops of golden grain which have been forced to grow by the farmer and have long since been garnered, thrashed, ground, made into loaves and baked and devoured.

The pile on the table at the Chevalier's left hand continually decreased. That on the right-hand corner continually grew bigger. The papers on the shelves gave promise of much more work for many a day to come. He finished one bundle—there was nothing in it—only the papers connected with some old mortgage, bill of sale and so forth—and threw it into the corner. Then he took up the next bundle.

This time he paused and smiled oddly. The Chevalier generally smiled sadly. This time it was the smile cynical, which gave a novel expression to his face.

He took up the bundle lying next to hand, turned it over curiously, and examined the exterior with more care than seemed necessary. In appearance it was much the same as the other

papers : there was the discoloration of age and some fading of the ink, but not much : the tape which tied the papers together had lost its colour. The Chevalier, noting these signs, smiled again. Something amused him. Perhaps something in his own mind : a reminiscence of the past.

Then he slowly untied the tape and opened the bundle. Within were several papers. One of these was a document engrossed on parchment : it was endorsed 'Last Will and Testament of Samuel Norbery.'

'Last Will and Testament of Samuel Norbery,' the Chevalier read three times over. Then he laid it down. 'This is very interesting,' he said. 'I am glad that I waited for the paper to take its proper turn. Yes—' He examined a corner of the outside sheet which had been folded over and showed a few lines written in very small character. 'Yes: there is no doubt. This is indeed remarkable. Now I think I know who is Mr. Norbery's heir. Fortunate young man! Fortunate indeed! Yet—who knows? I think there are not many in Southwark who can write the Magyar tongue—' He looked at the writing in the corner. 'Who knows? Fortune is deceitful. Now she smiles. And then, again, she frowns. Who knows if the Heir is indeed fortunate ?'

He spread open the paper upon the table and began to read it with great care. Suddenly his face expressed the utmost astonishment. 'Is it possible?' he cried. 'Why—what can this mean? Have I mistaken the packet? That is quite impossible. I marked it instantly and wrote this note upon it when he left the room. What does it mean ?'

There were two other inclosures in the packet. One of these was an ordinary letter, folded, and endorsed 'Directions for Mr. Norbery's Will:' the other was a packet of three or four big blue sheets pinned together, and endorsed 'Draft of Mr. Norbery's Will.'

Then the Chevalier rose and, taking these documents in his hand, he descended the stairs.

'Oh!' said Mayes, turning his head languidly, mind and body being now completely at rest. 'You think you've found something, do you? You've found something. Well, now, Chevalier, won't it keep till to-morrow?'

'I think it will keep if you wish it. And I also think that you will be glad to have it now.'

'Out with it then—' He stretched out his hand. 'Give it over. Well now, Chevalier, I've been thinking that you might find

something before long if only to pay for your keep. Hand it over—what is it, man? What are you looking so mighty mysterious about?

'It is called the Last Will and Testament of Samuel Norbery,' the Chevalier replied gravely.

'What?' Mr. Mayes dropped his pipe, which broke into fragments, and upset his gin-and-water. But he heeded not either disaster. 'What?' he repeated. 'Say that again.'

'The document which I have found on the table,' replied the Chevalier gravely, 'is endorsed "Last Will and Testament of Samuel Norbery."

'Oh!' Mr. Mayes leaned forward with staring eyes and red cheeks. 'Oh! At last!' he groaned, but not with pain or sorrow.

'I have opened and read it,' the Chevalier went on. 'It is witnessed by yourself.'

'Ay—by myself—and by Backler's clerk.'

'And by Mr. Backler's clerk. It is dated——'

'Give it over, Chevalier. Let me have it.' Mr. Mayes clutched the paper greedily. 'Oh! I knew it would be found at last. Yet how could it escape? They searched all through the old man's papers and through Backler's papers and couldn't find it. Yet here it is, a big bundle, endorsed outside. Chevalier, how could a big bundle like this get mislaid? You might as well mislay a barge loaded with petroleum casks on the Bank. It's a very curious thing.' He turned over the papers as if their appearance would enlighten him. 'What shelf did it come from?'

'I found it on the table.'

'Well—anyhow—here it is. Lord! I remember signing it. And now we shall know how he left his money. Somebody will be a lucky man when this will is proved. But it's got to leave my hands first. His last will. I remember as if it was only yesterday when it was signed.' He nursed the bundle like a baby while he allowed his memory to go back to the past. 'It was signed in Lawyer Backler's office—his own room at the back. How in the world could a great big paper like this get lost? To be sure, when he went silly with so much rum-and-water anything might have got lost. Yet such a paper as this—with such an endorsement—and us all searching everywhere. Where did you find it?'

'Among the papers on my table,' the Chevalier repeated.

'It was in the lawyer's own room, I remember,' Mr. Mayes went on regardless of the correction—now pleasantly launched upon the sea of memory. 'It is thirty years ago. Yet I remember the very morning. It was a baking day in summer—'

'In winter,' said the Chevalier.

'How the devil should you know? You weren't there. You were dodging the police in your own country—that's what you were doing. A scorching hot day it was. We'd just put in an execution for a young fellow—Chemist he was with a shop in Newcomer Street. The Chemist he went on like a madman, I remember, and his wife cried and said they were ruined. Mr. Norbery spoke up like a father, as he always did: told him it would be a lesson for the future against extravagance and getting into debt, and if he borrowed money of honest people he must pay it back—and so on. It was beautiful to hear Mr. Norbery rebuking one of his clients for extravagance while he was selling him up. I never could reach to it, never.' Mr. Mayes sighed. 'Afterwards the Chemist couldn't get a place and he went and made a hole in the river. From Southwark Bridge, he did, and his wife went off her chump. Well—when we'd done with their job, the Guv'nor turned short on me, "Mayes," he says, "you've got to witness my will," and we walked together to Backler's office in the Bridge Road. Thirty years ago it was. I remember it was the time when he'd got his dead wife's cousin for his housekeeper—Lucy—what was her name? And she offended the old man by marrying a chap down at Rotherhithe—a boat builder he was, Waller by name, and the old man sold him up too, pretty sharp, just to let him know that you couldn't go again Mr. Norbery for nothing. But I never heard what became of them. This was the Will I signed—' he patted the document tenderly. 'Lord! To think that it's found. Chevalier, I'm most afraid to open it. Yet there can't be anything for me in it. That's certain. I wonder how he left his money. I remember how I signed it. Mr. Backler's clerk—he's dead now—died three years ago in the workhouse—he signed first and I signed next.'

'No,' said the Chevalier, 'you signed first.'

'What are you keeping on interrupting for? Don't I tell you I remember his signing first?'

'Look at the will then.'

Mr. Mayes opened it. The Chevalier was right. His own signature came before, not after, that of the unfortunate Pauper.

'Well, now,' said Mr. Mayes, 'that shows what memory will

do. Now if you'd put me in the box I'd ha' sworn that I signed last. Lord! I remember as well as . . . and here's just the contrary. Why—I was no more than twenty-five or so, but I knew a little about Law, and I knew that if I was a witness there could be nothing for me, and I did think that after I'd served the Guv'nor since I was twelve he might have remembered me with a trifle. Not he! Well now, that's a queer trick for memory to serve me. Yes, there's the old man's signature—his "s" like print, with a dot at both ends: and his "y" with a curly tail and a dot on both sides of the tail: and there's mine—though I didn't think I wrote so well in those days. Mine is a hand that improves by practice. No, I certainly thought I had a clumsy fist in those days.'

'You said it was on a summer morning,' said the Chevalier.

'A summer morning it was.'

'Look at the will then,' the Chevalier repeated.

He pointed to the date. Mr. Mayes read and looked as one who finds the solid earth sinking beneath his feet. 'Lord!' he cried. 'I'm wrong again—"December the eighteenth!" Why, I'd ha' sworn—there was the Chemist and the shop: the man sputtering with rage and his wife all of a tremble—and—and the hot sunshine out o' doors. Why, I remember walking in the shade. Chevalier, what's the meaning of it? Do you think I've got a softening? To be sure it was thirty years ago.'

'Eight,' said the Chevalier.

'Thirty, you fool!' Mr. Mayes turned very red at the third correction of fact. 'How the devil should you know?'

'Look at the will again.'

Mr. Mayes looked again. The full date was December the eighteenth 1879. He gazed upon the date with open mouth. He could say nothing. He was quite confounded. For his memory had changed eight years into thirty: it had changed winter into summer: his own age from twenty-five to forty-seven: and his own signature from second to first. These are very wonderful tricks for memory to play.

He looked at the Chevalier and shook his head, because language failed him.

'I leave it with you,' said the clerk. 'I shall go to bed.'

'Stop—stop. Tell me first—before I read it—am I awake and in my senses?—tell me—how did the old man leave his money?'

'He left it all to Althea, daughter of Clement Indagine, to be paid over to her on the day when she should marry and change her name. Meantime, until her marriage, the whole was to be in the hands of trustees.'

'Who are the trustees?'

'Backler the Solicitor, and you—Joseph Mayes. But there's more in the Will.'

'Go away,' said Mr. Mayes faintly. 'Go away, Chevalier—I must—I must read it for myself.'

He read it through three times. First he read it as quickly as he could—being but a slow reader at the best. Then he read it twice over more slowly. Then he put the Will aside and read the other documents—Mr. Norbery's own letter of instructions and the Solicitor's draft.

Never in all his life had he been so bewildered. He remembered the hot summer morning, the wailing of the Chemist's wife, the signature of the lawyer's clerk followed by his own, in Mr. Backler's office, thirty years before. But for the life of him he could not remember the winter morning eight years ago, when he signed first.

'I could have sworn——' he repeated. In fact many times over he did swear. And yet, the Will dated Dec. 18, 1879, stared him in the face.

For the moment the disposition of the Will hardly concerned him. He was trying to remember—and he could in no way remember—signing that Will. Eight years ago, not thirty. And he himself appointed Trustee, with nothing for his trouble. That little fact, certainly, was exactly like the old man.

Only eight years ago, and yet he could not remember: while of the previous Will, that made thirty years before, destroyed, no doubt, in favour of the new will, he remembered all those details which he had set forth. A very strange situation, a truly original and previously unheard-of situation, that a Will should have been found after the Treasury people had searched everywhere: a Will not thrust away in some corner, but lying boldly among other papers: a Will witnessed by himself: only eight years ago—and yet he could not remember anything, not the least thing in the world about it.

Bewildered with this extraordinary trick of memory, Mr. Mayes stimulated his brain with a drink—with two—three drinks. Before going to bed he had succeeded in recalling all the circumstances of the case: he saw, quite clearly, the old lawyer; the

lawyer's clerk, also an old man; Mr. Norbery bent with age, a tottering old man, gathered together with himself, in the lawyer's office, the Will spread out upon the table: outside, a cold December morning with snow and sleet. Yet, curiously, when he took up the pen to witness the signature, the figures in the interesting group were transformed, and the season was changed as if in a scene at the Pantomime. It was a hot morning in summer: the lawyer and his clerk and Mr. Norbery himself were no longer old men, but in the prime of life—Mr. Norbery especially upright and straight, iron grey, fifty years of age: and he himself a young man, in appearance a working man, who wrote with difficulty and handled a pen with less freedom than a chisel.

He carried the Will to bed with him and put it under his pillow. But he was unable to sleep. When he dropped at last into an uneasy slumber he dreamed a hundred disquieting and uncomfortable things. And he awoke at six o'clock with a start, and sat up broad awake at once, fancying that he had not yet even read the Will.

He read it through very carefully. 'There was more in it,' the Chevalier said. Yes—there was much more in it.

The Testator, Samuel Norbery, gave the whole of his property, both real and personal, to George William Backler, Solicitor, and Joseph Mayes, Clerk to himself, upon Trust to pay his debts, his funeral and other expenses, and to accumulate the residue of his property until the end of the year 1887, or until his grand-niece, Althea Indagine, daughter of Clement Indagine, then resident at No. 12 New Thames Street, Bankside, gentleman, should change her name either by marriage with some person whose surname was not and never had been Indagine, or by public announcement, and that if the said Althea Indagine should marry such a person within the term aforesaid, the said Trustee should hold the whole of the Property in Trust for her absolutely.

But in case the said Althea Indagine should not contract such a marriage within the term aforesaid, the said Trustees were to become possessed of the said residue and accumulations upon Trust for Oliver, adopted son of Robert Luttrell, Physician, of 12 New Thames Street, Bankside.

The whole of this magnificent property to be handled by himself, in Trust! and to think that six years had passed without his having any of that handling! All that property in Trust to manage!

Then Mr. Mayes arose hurriedly and dressed, and went down-

stairs before his clerk had opened the shutters, swept out the office, and taken in the milk.

When breakfast was served he appeared with an unusual smile and a most friendly nod and looked about him with a cheerfulness quite uncommon, for Mr. Mayes, like the greater part of mankind, generally began the day grumpily. In his coat pocket was the will.

'Bacon and eggs,' he said. 'You've a light hand with the frying-pan, Chevalier, I will say that of you. Take another egg. Here's one browned beautiful. Well, nobleman, I've read the will right through.'

'You have read the Will right through,' the Chevalier repeated gravely.

'Yes, and a most wonderful thing it is. I don't know what they will say to it at the Treasury. I'll make a few inquiries first before we move; meantime, not a word, remember.'

'Not a word,' repeated the Chevalier, looking at him strangely.

'As for that poor girl, I'm sure I'm delighted.'

'You do remember signing the will, then?'

'Memory plays strange tricks sometimes,' Mr. Mayes replied with some confusion. 'But a good sleep sometimes sets all to rights. It's the work that tells, you see; when a man is tired, he doesn't remember everything.'

'The work that tells'—the Chevalier was very odd in his manner this morning.

'Nobleman,'—Mr. Mayes assumed his most benignant smile—'we're old friends by this time, ain't we? Certainly, says you. We know each other at last, don't we? Why, to be sure we do, says you. I've been a considerate employer, haven't I? None more so, says you, and a hasty word now and then doesn't count, between pals. If you were a younger man and could run about a bit faster, you should be a partner, Chevalier, instead of a clerk. That is what you should be.'

The Chevalier bowed his head gravely.

'A lucky day it was for you when I picked you up, a very lucky day. You were in rags, I remember.'

The Chevalier held up the skirt of his coat and pointed to his cuffs.

'Well—you are rather ragged still, Chevalier. But it's warm weather now. Before the cold sets in you shall have a new thick coat—rely upon that promise—if it is only a reward for finding this Will. I took you in out of the street.'

' You did.'

' I made you my clerk——'

' And your cook and messenger,' said the Chevalier.

' No one cooks so well as you, and no one handles a frying pan or a griddle with more feeling. I always feel at meals, that it's a blessing for both of us to have well-cooked wholesome food—well—you've had light work—you can't deny that.'

' I do not deny it.'

' You've had the run of your teeth: enough to eat, haven't you?'

The Chevalier bowed gravely and spread out his hands.

' For your bedroom, you have a spacious, lofty and well-lighted apartment in the roof, commanding a splendid view of the rising Surrey hills. In the daytime you enjoy the use of a noble reception room—it was the back office, in which they were sitting—' replete, I am sure, with every comfort—it contained a table and two chairs, one a wooden arm-chair, the other without arms. ' With every comfort,' Mr. Mayes repeated. ' And with all the latest improvements: you have a splendid kitchen with a beautiful range: you have the unrestricted use of a garden—he looked out of the window upon the black patch with a single grimy laurel in it—' small and compact and elegantly shrubbed. You have a refined home and a cheerful if limited circle: my society—mine: diet unlimited and drink in moderation. You would also have the use of a bath if the pipes were in order. And in return, such light work as has to be done. Don't think, Chevalier, that I grumble at the cost. It is a Christian duty to entertain Foreign noblemen, as well as one's fellow-creatures, especially when they are in rags and patriotic in their disposition. I do not grudge it, I say, Chevalier, I'd do it again.'

' What do you ask me to do?'

' Well——' Mr. Mayes looked uneasy. ' First of all, say nothing. Do you know the girl?'

' I know her.'

' Tell her nothing,' he repeated.

' I shall tell her, for the moment, nothing. I have already promised. I wait to see what happens next.'

' And look here, Chevalier——' he shuffled his feet and his eyes fell. ' Memory is a very rum thing. It's the rummest thing there is. You took me by surprise last night. I was thinking about something else. Perhaps a man may have a kind of softening and not know it. As for thinking it was thirty years ago and

in the summer—when it was eight years ago, and in the winter. Ha! ha! that's a good joke—we'll have our laugh over that—to ourselves, Chevalier, won't we? To ourselves; not with other people—we won't take anybody else into that joke. I suppose—but I wouldn't say that outside—that I was a little drunk.'

'You were perfectly sober.'

'I must have been a little drunk—I had some gin-and-water before supper, and what with the beer at supper and the gin-and-water after supper—'

'You were perfectly sober,' the Chevalier repeated.

'Oh! very well—then—it comes to this, Chevalier, you must hold your tongue about it.'

'You remember now that you witnessed the will eight years ago.'

'Certainly. Quite well. Certainly. How could I ever have made such a—'

Then Mr. Mayes caught the Chevalier's eyes, and there was a look in them so queer, so strange, so monitory, that he left the sentence unfinished and returned to his bacon and eggs.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GUARANTEE IS CUT OFF.

SOME men carry good luck with them wherever they go—good luck to others if not to themselves. Others carry bad luck with them; they are accursed with the possession of the Evil Eye: those who become associated with them presently fall into some kind of trouble, even though the unfortunate cause—he who brought the ill luck in his pocket—may still continue to prosper mightily. It seemed, for instance, at first, that the young man from the ends of the earth had brought with him every kind of happiness; yet behold: In the house which had sheltered him there was one girl who wept when she was alone and hung her head when she was in the family circle. And in the other house which had given him hospitality, there was a man whom he left restless and discontented, and a girl whom he had taken out of monotony and stagnant calm and filled with new thoughts. Now the putting of new thoughts into a resident of that house was like

the turning of a rushing mountain stream into a still, placid mountain tarn. Before Laurence came to these distant shores from far Australia, the inhabitants were even as those peaceful, tranquil, contented Caribs before Columbus touched the shores of Hispaniola. The Caribs knew few arts and desired to know no more. They lived and loved after the manner of their ancestors ; some of them, perhaps, even ate up each other, following the same time-honoured example. On Bank Side, Oliver, contented with his salary of three pounds a week, courted Cassie, and was gradually forgetting the abominable principles he had learned in Germany ; he lived the simple life and thought of science day and night. Althea's boat lay riding on the flood while that river nymph saw troops of ghosts walking upon the banks and gliding in splendid barges up and down the river. The Poet was preparing for posterity the Complete Edition of his Poems ; in a work designed for posterity no one is ever in a hurry : it may extend for a thousand years and one would not grow tired of it. Now—now—as in those lovely Caribbean isles after the advent of the white-winged ships, all, all was changed. The old contentment was gone : and he who could have set things right was also gone, no one knew where. More misfortune—much more misfortune—was to follow.

Take the unhappy case of Lucius himself.

Up to forty years of age the career of this legal functionary was one of great success and well-merited honour. He bore his success and his honours with becoming dignity. At the age of fifteen, when he left the paternal Academy, he entered as a junior—nothing but a junior—a boy clerk—in Chambers, being in the service of half a dozen gentlemen, for the most part newly called to the Bar. When the others drifted apart, Lucius attached himself—at a small Guarantee—to one who presently began to attract the attention of solicitors and rose rapidly into practice and to that kind of income which so much glorifies and illustrates the dignity of the Bar. In due course, Mr. Polter assumed silk ; he became Polter Q.C. The Guarantee then touched the respectable figure of 200*l.*, in addition to which there were the clerk's fees, so that Lucius was in the receipt of an income far beyond anything he had ever expected, and stood among the most envied of his brethren who assist upon the Higher Branch.

The Barrister's Clerk occupies a unique position in Clerkdom. His income, not his Guarantee or fixed salary, rises and falls with that of his master. There is thus established a kind of partnership : or rather, there is the relationship of client and patron. If

the patron or the lawyer has a bad time, it is shared by the client or clerk. When the patron is successful, the client, like the Pope, leads a happy life. But, as in every other earthly career, there are many who fail in this blessedness of a patron's success and never rise above the Guarantee. And, as in all other professions, there are many kinds of men who follow it. There is the dignified clerk, for instance, such as Lucius Cottle, whose manners are founded on those of the Bench, rather than the Bar. There is the convivial clerk who drinketh with other clerks, even with those of the Lower Branch, and hath no pride in his calling, and may be seen in billiard rooms and music halls. There is again the clerk who brings business: he presents an affable and cheerful countenance; he has a warm grasp and a sunny smile, and he has a cold heart: in these days, it is such a clerk as is most desired.

There was no more dignified clerk in the Four Inns of Court than Mr. Cottle: nor was there one who was more respected in both branches. Polter Q.C. was envied for the possession of this Prince, Paragon, or Phœnix of Clerks. He was supposed to cause the flow of business as the moon causeth the flow of tides. No clerk ever received a brief with a finer air: he conferred a favour by taking it: he did not display gratitude; his was the obliging party, not the obliged.

'We are very busy just now,' he would say, lifting a brow pre-occupied with the cares of work. 'But you may leave it with me; we will do what we can for you.' Nor did any clerk rate his master's services at a more princely value.

Polter would have been made a judge: everybody said that he was certain to be made a judge: in that case one of the snug little berths of which there are so many in the Courts of Law would have been found for Lucius. Alas! The Lady Atropos—let us speak of her with awe—cut a certain thread with her scissors and Polter Q.C. had to retire from chambers, club, Cumberland Terrace, and his wide circle of friends and the world. He gave up practice and fell asleep in Kensal Green. Never did a greater misfortune befall any Barrister's Clerk. That was five years before this history begins, when Lucius was forty years of age.

Everyone, at first, said that the man would be fortunate who should secure Polter's clerk. But then every man in good practice had his own clerk already. Therefore, Lucius had to look among the rising men. He attached himself to one who had all the ambition requisite for the receipt of the most enormous income,

but lacked the power of convincing solicitors that it would be to their advantage to give him that income. This aspirant thought that business would follow in the train of Polter's clerk, and retained him, at first, on the old Guarantee.

The result was not quite what was expected. For though some of the clerk's old friends stood by him, the new master was not a Polter.

Then the Guarantee was reduced.

A second and a third time, it was reduced.

It now stood at the figure—ridiculous when one considers the ability of the recipient—of . . . but no, 'twere indelicate to set it down.

Five years passed. The learned Counsel, who had once seemed one of the coming men, rose no higher. His chance was gone: he would never get any higher endorsement of the few briefs which came in: dignity was lost upon such a master. The chambers were shared by three or four young gentlemen, who talked, smoked cigarettes, read French novels, sat on tables, and told each other stories—and of what flippancy!—and had no feeling, either for the dignity of a clerk or the gravity of their profession. One of them spent his whole time in writing for the magazines: he was known to have written a novel, for the production of which he had paid a large sum, and he was said to have succeeded in getting a farce accepted at the Melpomene Theatre—a farce—and a novel—oh! dread Shade of Polter!

The last blow fell; the Guarantee was cut off: Lucius was informed that his services, in the depressed condition of business, could all be performed by a boy. He could, therefore, take a month's notice or a month's pay. The blow was not unexpected, yet, when it fell, it was like the stroke of a hammer on the temple, for it stunned this clerk and for a whole morning left him speechless. The vivacious young gentlemen told their stories within hearing, but he heard them not. He sat at his desk, but though there was no work to do he held pen in hand and thought that he was driving it.

At the same moment another disaster fell upon the unfortunate family. Misfortunes are gregarious, as is well known: they love not solitary ways: they will still be moving, if they can, in troops.

We must not blame the Manager of the St. Paul's Cathedral branch. He is responsible for the conduct of the business: if things go wrong it is he who is blamed: he is not, again, the

Proprietor : if he were, he could afford sometimes to pass over, to pardon, to accept excuses, to give time, to be moved with compassion. A Manager cannot permit himself any of these pleasures.

It was Cassie's duty to receive visitors, to point out to them the various styles in which grace and comeliness such as theirs may be represented by the sun : to take their guineas and to show them such civility as would give this *atelier* a good name. As she was an obliging girl of pleasing address, and appearance to correspond, she had hitherto given satisfaction to the Manager. Alas ! since her trouble began, all this was changed. Her smiles vanished : her manner was short, her appearance sad ; and as day followed day, there was no change in these signs of trouble and distress.

'See now, young lady,' said the Manager. 'Things can't go on this way, you know.'

'What way ?' asked Cassie, perfectly well understanding.

'What's come over you ? What's the matter with you ?'

'Nothing,' said the girl.

'That's nonsense, and you know it. Where's your cheerfulness ? where's your old smile, and your good looks ? Well—it's no concern of mine what the trouble may be, but don't you see that we can't go on ?'

'I do my work,' she replied.

'Yes, you receive the people as if you wanted to cry over them. Hang it ! People won't be cried over : you might just as well pray for 'em. And then they go away and say the girl looks so miserable that she must be ill-treated—who ill-treats you in this house, I should like to know ?'

'Nobody.'

'Nobody, of course not. But we get all the credit of it. Why, you are actually bringing a bad name on the place. We can't go on, you know, we really can't.'

'What do you want me to do ?'

'Get back your cheerful looks, my girl, that's what I want you to do. If you can do that I've no complaint to make. If you can't, why then, you see, we must consider our position.'

In a week's time, Cassie remaining contumacious in melancholy, the Manager did consider the position. Now when a business man considers a position, he is not like a military man engaged in the same occupation. He is not going to defend or to storm that position. He is going to put an end to it. The position therefore vanished. Cassie received a week's notice.

Alas for the persecution of Fate! It was on the same day that the Guarantee was withdrawn.

Mr. Cottle came home that evening with an air of increased dignity. He at first said nothing, but took his arm-chair, and sat bolt upright without book or newspaper, his thin legs crossed, his hands upon the arms of the chair, his head erect, as one who awaits buffets of fortune.

It was an attitude for a gentleman in time of trouble undeserved. Flavia, the most sympathetic of the three as regards her father, was the first to perceive that something had happened—of course, something bad; but she said nothing. Presently Cornelia, from her chair, became also aware that something had happened. The uneasiness of anticipation is as catching as mumps. Sempronius perceived that something was in the air; he, too, was arrived at that stage of experience when things unusual are expected to be things unpleasant.

Cassie suffering on her own account regarded not her parent. Besides she was looking out of the window. She saw and felt nothing but her own sadness.

The Master of the house, not unconscious of awakened curiosity, sat in silence: from time to time a smile passed over his face, as of one who endures, or a gentle nod, as of one who accepts: but he would not too quickly satisfy curiosity. His own admirable behaviour under misfortune pleased and consoled him. Does it not always console the sufferer when he can feel that he has done or said the right thing? Consider the frequent funerals of the Mile End Road, where they still know how to do justice to a funeral. As the men in black walk stately before and beside the bier, you may look into the carriages and mark how the grief of the bereaved is visibly consoled by the admiration of the people on the pavement. They sit upright with conscious pride: the women bridle and smile: the men nudge each other. A family which can do things in such a style is indeed one which confers honour on its members.

When Lucius presently arose and sought the book with which he illustrated every difficulty in the conduct of life—I mean his father's work, which was his guide in doubt and his fount of consolation in trouble—Flavia understood that the position was serious indeed.

He opened the book and laid it before him. Then he turned over the pages and cleared his throat as one who is about to commence Family Prayers. He then read aloud, with intervals for

meditation, detached maxims or sentences as he found them in the volume. The effect was as saddening as the ringing of a knell or the firing of minute guns at sea.

'When Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar could not console the afflicted Patriarch, the Hand which had laid the suffering upon him was pleased graciously to remove them. With this example before him, the wise man waits.'

'Children,' said the expositor, 'the wise man waits.'

Flavia was unable to withhold a murmur of admiration. Never was such a man as father for behaving in the right way. Other sufferers waltz around and let themselves rip: he on the other hand—but what had happened to him?

The reader went on:—

'Belisarius, blind and old, extends his hand and begs an obolus. Crœsus is laid upon the pyre to be burned alive. Dionysius teaches a school. These are the commonest illustrations of Fickle Fortune. We need not go to history for examples of her inconstancy, because every workhouse presents us with many proofs. Let us read in the Book of Life, which lies open to all of us, lessons that may keep us sober in times of fatness, and resigned in times of dearth. Should the worst happen to us we have at hand instances parallel with our own case or even worse.' These, children, are the words of your grandfather. 'The wise man is resigned in times of dearth, that is, I take it, not dearness, because I have always found things dear, all my life—but, in times of scarcity, when not only luxuries have to be abandoned but necessities have to be straitened.'

At this point Sempronius, who was sitting behind his father, clapped his hands to his ears so as not to hear these signals of distress. Besides he had a most wonderful book to read: it was about an heroic boy with Nelson. And Cassie about this time became conscious of something unusual and turned her head. And Cornelia coughed quietly. The action is with some an indication of satisfaction or of pride which must manifest itself in some way. In the Church one cannot clap hands, stamp with the feet, or cry encore. Therefore one coughs quietly. Well mannered ladies in a certain rank of life seldom mark their approval in any other way.

Her brother turned two or three pages more, and in the voice of a clergyman at a funeral began again:—

'The wants of the body are few. The chances of Fortune cannot touch the soul. He who——'

'Father!' cried Flavia, springing to her feet, 'what in the world has happened?'

Her father closed the book, laid his left hand upon it and thrust the right hand into his bosom. Then he rose and stood upon the hearth and looked round him.

'Children,' he said, 'and Sister Cornelia, I have this day received intimation that the Guarantee is withdrawn.'

'Lucius,' cried his sister, 'you don't mean to say that you are out of place?'

'We don't call it "place," Sister, in the Higher Branch. The Guarantee, I said, has been withdrawn—the Guarantee.'

'Well, father,' said Flavia, 'but such as you can easily find another—Guarantee. You have only to lift your little finger. Why, I have often wondered at your staying so long where there was so little for you.'

'I hope I may find another Guarantee. At the same time I do not disguise from myself that business is bad and such an official as myself, with thirty years of experience, may not immediately command the price which he not unnaturally puts upon his own services. I have received a month's notice with option of a month's pay; this I have taken, because I shall then have leisure to look around. Meantime, my children, until something else is found there is no income and only the month's pay in hand.'

'Well, I've got twenty-five shillings a week,' said Flavia, 'and there's Aunt, and Cassie has got eighteen shillings. We shan't starve for a bit.'

'Oh!' said Cassie, 'I was going to tell you. It is a terrible misfortune—I didn't know how dreadful it was going to be, I've had a week's notice too.'

'You, Cassie,' cried Flavia, 'why I thought—what have you done now?'

'The Manager wants more cheerfulness. He says he won't have people cried over.'

'Oh!' said Flavia, 'this is terrible.'

'I dare say I shall find another place,' said Cassie. 'Anything will do—what does it matter? Perhaps they will take me on at an undertaker's.'

'Oh! what shall we do?' cried Flavia in despair. 'This misfortune on the top of the other.'

'My children, we have need of all the fortifications of philosophy.' Lucius stepped to the table again and opened his book.

'The other night,' said Cornelia—'last night it was—no—the day before yesterday towards the morning, I dreamed of rainbows. I might have known they meant a change of fortune.'

'Well, aunt,' said Flavia, 'if you must dream, you had better dream a way out of it, I think.' She stepped over to her sister and laid her arm round her. 'Cassie dear,' she said, 'must you go? Won't they keep you on if you come to look happy again? Try, dear—consider—how are we to live? Can't you smile and laugh and joke with them as you used to do?'

'Look happy, Flavia?' The girl turned her wan and sorrow-stricken face. 'Look happy? I? Don't mind me, dear, there must be some place where they want a miserable girl.'

'Oh! I could kill him—I wish I could kill him,' Flavia whispered.

Her father had found another passage and read it—his words falling again upon their hearts like the tolling of that dismal bell of death.

'Virtue makes the mind invincible. It places us beyond the power of Fortune, though not beyond the malice which that Goddess sometimes seems to show. When Zeno was told that all his goods were drowned—"Why then," said he, "I perceive that Fortune hath a mind to make me a philosopher." My children, I am much in the position of Zeno: let me, too, become a philosopher—I will be no longer Lucius but Zeno.'

(*To be continued.*)

Ruckinge Church.

'And we said how dreary and desolate and forlorn the church was, and how long it was since any music but that of the moth-eaten harmonium and the heartless mixed choir had sounded there. And we said, "Poor old church! it will never hear any true music any more." Then she turned to us from the door of the Lady chapel, which was plastered and whitewashed, and had a stove and the Evangelical Almanac in it, and her eyes were full of tears. And standing there she sang "Ave Maria"—it was Gounod's music, I think—with her voice and her face like an angel's. And while she sang a stranger came to the church door and stood listening, but he did not see us. Only we saw that he loved her singing. And he went away as soon as the hymn was ended, we also soon following, and the church was left lonely as before.'—*Extract from our Diary.*

THE boat crept slowly through the water-weeds
 That greenly cover all the waterways,
 Between high banks where ranks of sedge and reeds
 Sigh one sad secret all their quiet days,
 Through grasses, water-mint and rushes green
 And flags and strange wet blossoms, only seen
 Where man so seldom comes, so briefly stays.

From the high bank the sheep looked calmly down,
 Unscared to see my boat and me go by ;
 The elm trees showed their dress of golden brown
 To winds that should disrobe them presently ;
 And a marsh sunset flamed across the wold,
 And the still water caught the lavished gold,
 The primrose and the purple of the sky.

The boat pressed ever through the weeds and sedge
 Which, rustling, clung her steadfast prow around ;
 The iris nodded at the water's edge,
 Bats in the elm trees made a ghostly sound ;
 With whirring wings a wild duck sprang to sight.
 And flew, black-winged, towards the crimson light,
 Leaving my solitude the more profound.

We moved towards the church, my boat and I—
 The church that at the marsh edge stands alone ;
 It caught the reflex of the sunset sky
 On golden-lichened roof and grey-green stone.

Through snow and shower and sunshine it had stood
 In the thronged graveyard's infinite solitude,
 While many a year had come, and flowered, and gone.

From the marsh-meadow to the field of graves
 But just a step, across a lichenèd wall.
 Thick o'er the happy dead the marsh grass waves,
 And cloudy wreaths of marsh mist gather and fall,
 And the marsh sunsets shed their gold and red
 Over still hearts that once in torment fed
 At Life's intolerable festival.

The plaster of the porch has fallen away
 From the lean stones, that now are all awry,
 And through the chinks a shooting ivy spray
 Creeps in—sad emblem of fidelity—
 And wreathes with life the pillars and the beams
 Built long ago—with, ah, what faith and dreams!—
 By men whose faith and dreams have long gone by.

The rusty key, the heavy rotten door,
 The dead, unhappy air, the pillars green
 With mould and damp, the desecrated floor
 With bricks and boards where tombstones should have
 been
 (And were once); all the musty, dreary chill—
 They strike a shudder through my being still
 When memory lights again that lightless scene.

And where the altar stood, and where the Christ
 Reached out His arms to all the world, there stood
 Law-tables, as if love had not sufficed
 To all the world has ever known of good!
 Our Lady's chapel was a lightless shrine;
 There was no human heart and no divine,
 No odour of prayer, no altar, and no rood.

There was no scent of incense in the air,
 No sense of all the past breathed through the aisle,
 The white glass windows turned to mocking glare
 The lovely sunset's gracious rosy smile;
 A vault, a tomb wherein was laid to sleep
 All that a man might give his life to keep
 If only for an instant's breathing while.

Cold with my rage against the men who held
 At such cheap rate the labours of the dead,
 My heart within me sank, while o'er it swelled
 A sadness that would not be comforted ;
 An awe came on me, and I seemed to face
 The invisible spirit of the dreary place,
 To hear the unheard voice of it, which said,—

‘ Is love, then, dead upon earth ?
 Ah ! who shall tell or be told
 What my walls were once worth
 When men worked for love, not for gold ?
 Each stone was made to hold
 A heartful of love and faith ;
 Now love and faith are dead,
 Dead are the prayers that are said,
 Nothing is living but Death !

‘ Oh for the old glad days,
 Incense thick in the air,
 Passion of thanks and praise,
 Passion of trust and of prayer !
 Ah ! the old days were fair,
 Love on the earth was then, —
 Strong were men’s souls, and brave :
 Those men lie in the grave,
 They will live not again !

‘ Then all my arches rang
 With music glorious and sweet,
 Men’s souls burned as they sang,
 Tears fell down at their feet,
 Hearts with the Christ-heart beat,
 Hands in men’s hands held fast,
 Union and brotherhood were !
 Ah ! the old days were fair,
 Therefore the old days passed.

‘ Then, when later there came
 Hatred, anger, and strife,
 The sword blood-red, and the flame,
 And the stake, and contempt of life,
 Husband severed from wife,

Hearts with the Christ-heart bled :
 Through the worst of the fight
 Still the old fire burned bright,
 Still the old faith was not dead.

‘ Though they tore my Christ from the cross,
 And mocked at the Mother of Grace,
 And broke my windows across,
 Defiling the holy place—
 Children of death and disgrace !
 They spat on the altar stone,
 They tore down and trampled the rood,
 Stained my pillars with blood,
 Left me lifeless, alone.

‘ Yet, when my walls were left
 Robbed of all beauty and bare,
 Still God cancelled the theft,
 The soul of the thing was there.
 In my damp, unwindowed air
 Fugitives stopped to pray,
 And their prayers were splendid to hear,
 Like the sound of a storm that is near—
 And love was not dead that day.

‘ Then the birds of the air built nests
 In these empty shadows of mine,
 And the warmth of their brooding breasts
 Still warmed the untended shrine.
 His creatures are all divine ;
 He is praised by the woodland throng,
 And my old walls echoed and heard
 The passionate praising word,
 And love still lived in their song.

‘ Then came the Protestant crew
 And made me the thing you have known—
 Whitewashed and plastered me new,
 Covered my marble and stone—
 Could they not leave me alone ?
 Vain was the cry, for they trod
 Over my tombs, and I saw
 Books and the Tables of Law
 Set in the place of my God.

RUCKINGE CHURCH.

‘ And love is dead, so it seems !
 Shall I hear never again
 The music of heaven and of dreams,
 Songs of ideals of men ?
 Great dreams and songs we had then,
 Now I but hear from the wood
 Cry of a bat or a bird.
 Oh for love’s passionate word
 Sent from men’s hearts to the Good !

‘ Sometimes men come, and they sing,
 But I know not their song nor their voice ;
 They have no hearts they can bring,
 They have no souls to rejoice,
 Theirs is but folly and noise.
 Oh for a voice that could sing
 Songs to the Queen of the blest,
 Hymns to the Dearest and Best,
 Songs to our Master, her King ! ’

The church was full of silence. I shut in
 Its loss and loneliness, and went my way.
 Its sadness was not less its walls within
 Because I wore it in my heart that day,
 And many a day since, when I see again
 Marsh sunsets, and across the golden plain
 The church’s golden roof and arches grey.

Along wet roads, all shining with late rain,
 And through wet woods, all dripping, brown and sere,
 I came one day towards the church again.
 It was the spring-time of the day and year,
 The sky was light and bright, and flecked with cloud
 That, wind-swept, changeful, through bright rents allowed
 Sun and blue sky to smile and disappear.

The sky behind the old grey church was grey—
 Grey as my memories, and grey as I ;
 The forlorn graves each side the grassy way
 Called to me ‘ Brother ! ’ as I passed them by.
 The door was open. ‘ I shall feel again,’
 I thought, ‘ that inextinguishable pain
 Of longing loss and hopeless memory.’

When—oh electric flash of ecstasy !
 No spirit's moan of pain fell on my ear—
 A human voice, an angel's melody,
 God let me in that perfect moment hear.
 Oh the sweet rush of gladness and delight,
 Of human striving to the heavenly light,
 Of great ideals, permanent and dear !

All the old dreams linked with the newer faith,
 All the old faith with higher dreams enwound,
 Surged through the very heart of loss and death
 In passionate waves of pure and perfect sound.
 The past came back : the Christ, the Mother-Maid,
 The incense of the hearts that praised and prayed,
 The past's peace, and the future's faith profound.

*'Ave Maria,
 Gratia plena,
 Dominus tecum :
 Benedicta tu
 In mulieribus,
 Et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus.
 Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
 Ora pro nobis peccatoribus
 Nunc et in hora mortis nostræ. Amen.*

And all the soul of all the past was here—
 A human heart that loved the great and good,
 A heart to which the great ideals were dear,
 One that had heard and that had understood,
 As I had done, the church's desolate moan,
 And answered it as I had never done,
 And never willed to do, and never could.

I left the church, glad to the soul and strong,
 And passed along by fresh earth-scented ways ;
 Safe in my heart the echo of that song
 Lived, as it will live with me all my days.
 The church will never lose that echo, nor
 Be quite as lonely ever any more ;
 Nor will my soul, where too that echo stays.

E. NESBIT.

Sunrise in Sussex.

IT is nearly three o'clock, but the moon, high in the heavens, still floods the silent earth with a light like a ghostly sunlight in which every familiar object looks mysterious and strange. The stars burn and flash as though near and living, and no longer seem set, mere twinkling spots in some thick curtain, but each, a separate world, hangs in illimitable space. A chilling breeze blows from the far south-west over the long range of hills which hide the sea, where the waves keep up that faint and ceaseless murmur on the shore, so low and musical that it scarcely breaks into the stillness of the night.

The dew drips from the leaves with a soft pattering like rain, and, standing in the shadow of the hedge, it is hard to believe that no summer shower is falling. Presently, with stealthy footsteps, a white-faced sheep-dog ambles up the lane, but seeing the silent figure watching from the shade he pauses, and after a brief scrutiny gallops off with a whining growl, half fear and half defiance. He is out poaching, and, although his days are well spent in watching the flock, at night—a sort of canine Dr. Jekyll—he reverts to the habits of his untamed ancestors, and hunts for the mere love of evil doing.

As I walk down the quiet road in this pause before sunrise all else seems to be asleep, and even the trees and bushes, with unmoving boughs and drooping leaves, might be resting with other living things till the morning. The change is slow, and scarcely to be noticed as it comes, but soon, although it is still night and shadow in the west, the eastern sky begins to be faintly suffused with the pale primrose light of dawn.

From the homesteads far and near the cocks, till now silent, suddenly hail the daybreak, a colt whinnies from the pasture, the cows are lowing from their shelter, and a fox creeps from the orchard hedge and hurries away to cover. He it is doubtless who three nights since carried off Mrs. Woolven's sitting hen—which

had foolishly elected to nest in the hedgebank, far from home and safety—and ate the thirteen eggs, leaving nothing but a few feathers and a heap of broken egg-shells.

'Drat they nasty foxes!' says Mrs. Woolven; 'they gives me a hem¹ of a lot of trouble.' The good lady has no very kindly sentiments towards either the foxes, the huntsmen, or the hounds, although prudence keeps her from any active hostility, for the Squire often sends along for a pair of her fat chickens or a duck, and her husband, 'old Master² Woolven,' is head keeper. The small farmers hereabouts share Mrs. Woolven's prejudice, however, for what with broken hedges, damaged crops, and stolen poultry, there is mostly a pretty big balance against the Hunt, occasional doles by way of compensation notwithstanding.

The light in the east is growing stronger, and the church tower and the broken outlines of roofs on the ridge three miles away are just visible as some far-off clock strikes four. The cock-crowing is now incessant, and in a dozen modulations from every side: faint and musical and near and noisy, and again barely audible in the extreme distance.

Yet the wild birds are not awake. A little later and almost all the stars have faded; but the moon still shines serenely, though her light is paling, and half the heavens are conscious of the coming of the sun. One by one the rooks in the near elm trees are waking, and an occasional 'caw' questions the morning, but they grow silent again and do not stir. Last night they came home at sunset, but soon, in a long straggling company, went swiftly at a great height away towards the dying sun. The blue of the distant sky was here and there half hidden by thin wreaths of rosy mist, and in the west a huge mass of darker cloud, patched with red, sloped away like a hillside covered with heather-blossom. As the rooks flew they showed almost pink against the sky, and the warm sunset light softened their outlines, so that when they grew less distinct they seemed, as I watched them, like a receding host of angels in one of Doré's Paradise pictures. Why did they

¹ 'Hem' is a Sussex word, and adds force to an expression; it is also used instead of 'very'; while 'hem-a-bit' means 'not-a-bit,' or 'certainly not.'

² 'Master' (pronounced 'Mass'). 'A single man will be called by his Christian name all his life long in Sussex; but a married man, old or young, is "Master"—even to his most intimate friend and fellow-worker—as long as he can earn his own livelihood; but as soon as he becomes past work he turns into "the old gentleman," leaving the bread-winner to rank as master of the household. "Master" is quite a distinct title from "Mr.," which is always pronounced "Mus;" thus, "Mus Smith" is the employer, "Master Smith" the man he employs.—V. Parish's *Dictionary of the Sussex Dialect*.

fly sunwards so late? Do they go to see the sun set beyond the hills? It was almost dark when they came slowly back to settle for the night.

What quaint birds they are, half human in their ways! Woolven had a great deal to say about them when I dropped in at his cottage for a chat the other evening. Last winter they bothered him sadly, for they followed him about in flocks and ate all the pheasants' food as fast as he threw it down, although he dodged them, and doubled about in the woods, and fired powder at them by the hour. At last in despair he fired a charge of shot 'right into the thick of 'em,' and killed over twenty outright, besides wounding a lot more. He and his wife ate most of them.

'Weren't they very strong?' I asked.

'No, no, leastways¹ I don't think so; they must be flaumed,² you know, Mr. William, not picked.'

Hereupon Mrs. Woolven tells with much unction a tale of old Dr. Barrow, of H——, whose cook, in her ignorance (or with a little and dangerous knowledge), hearing that rooks must not be picked, put them in a pie just as they were! Her master, equally ignorant, but anxious to adopt the ways of the country, ate as much as he could, but—and here Mrs. Woolven reproduces the action of his jaws and says 'Yawm, yawm, yawm, yawm'—'the feathers did stick in my teeth so,' says he, 'I couldn't enjoy they rooks a little bit.'

I walk further down the road; a corncake cries from the wheat field, some thrush calling in the hedgerow is answered by his mate from the wood; soon a chorus of waking birds begin to whistle and twitter in their hidden roosting-places; the change from the strange stillness is almost startling. A blackbird chatters his warning note as I cross the field but does not fly; he is the watchman for all the birds and beasts and often spoils sport by his cry, which tells the less suspicious creatures of some danger. If a strange cat or a stoat comes near his nest he will hurry from bush to bush, scolding and chattering, and with the most conspicuous bravery try to lead away or confuse the enemy. How his nest so often escapes destruction is puzzling, for he and his mate build in all sorts of easily accessible places, and, like many other birds, seem to choose to make their nursery near human habitations. In my garden here one pair built in the low faggot

¹ 'Leastways'—leastwise, at least.

² 'Flaumed'—skinned.

stack, and another in a little bush close to the path ; but a robin and a wren chose even less sheltered situations, for the first built in the middle of a wooden reel of barbed fence wire left on the grass till needed, and the wrens put their cosy green moss-house in the folds of a canvas screen hung over a rope.

But I know of no instance of the confidence of a pair of robins more curious than that which was displayed at Nunbourne, three miles from this, where the birds built in the boot of the Squire's carriage in spite of its daily double journey to the distant railway station. Here the eggs were hatched and the nestlings reared, the sitting mother being shut in safely while the carriage was in use, and the boot reopened on its return to the coach house.

Walking by this narrow footpath across the wheat field, the tall ripe stalks brush against me at every step and shake off the dew, which glistens in heavy shining drops on everything, till my feet are soaked with moisture. None of the birds have yet flown, although for half an hour I have heard them, and the bats are still out ; the country folk call these 'flitter-mice,' a far prettier and more expressive name than 'bat,' for they look like winged mice, and no word describes the rapid movement of their little wings so well as 'flitter.' 'Little' wings they hardly have, however, in proportion to their size, for a small specimen which I measured had a body only two inches long and an inch wide, but its wings were eight inches across. At this moment the rooks, with no gradual waking sound, but suddenly, rise up in a great company from the trees and go straight away westward, and now a robin leaving his shelter perches on the cart-shed and sings his morning song. I turn to look at the inconceivable beauty of the eastern sky, all a clear golden pink, with a few bars of slate-coloured cloud across it, and one thin fast-moving wreath of vapour hurrying from the sunrise which lights up its edges with red. Two or three flocks of wood-pigeons fly over, and the other birds, finches and larks and starlings, and many more, begin to hasten towards some favourite feeding-place ; like the rooks, they all fly westward. At a great height up, three herons, their long legs trailing out behind, cross the sky far above range and silently flying. The swallows are later than the other birds, but they make up for lost time when they come, circling and twittering while they float upon the air as on a sea. These share with three familiar birds a good deal of respect from the country boys, who have a rhyme, which, as Mr. Parish says in his delightful 'Dialect Dictionary,' 'commands more obedience than a recent Act of Parliament.'

Robins and wrens
Are God Almighty's friends;
Martins and swallers
Are God Almighty's scholars.

Many are the superstitions about swallows common to other counties besides Sussex. Where they build no lightning will strike, money is safe, and so on. I asked Master Woolven about these fancies, but he professed ignorance.

'Will they keep thieves from your money, Master Woolven ?'

'I don't justly¹ know, but my mistus had some build right under where she keeps hers.'

Great agitation on Mrs. Woolven's part at this indiscreet disclosure.

'Go on, ye great silly, I don't keep it there ; 'tis all nonsense, Mr. William !'

But my curiosity is awakened, so with a little persuasion Mrs. Woolven tells the story.

'I went up in my room, and there I see two swallers fly in and out of the window ; out they goos, in they comes. So I says, "Oh, ye purty little things," I says, and I calls Sam to come and look. They kep' twiddle, twiddle, twiddle, and in they comes, out they goos. Well, I looked, and there if they wasn't building their nestes on the back of my looking-glass ! Oh, it was in a terr'ble mess—mud, and dirt, and hay, and all splashed on the dressing-table. So I shets the window and I says, "No more, ye little silly birds," I says, and I took and cleaned and washed the glass, and I don't know what they did after that.'

Other birds besides swallows have in the past, I gathered, pressed their attentions upon Woolven to quite an embarrassing extent, a robin often making so free as to come in and sit on the kitchen table and sing, while the barn-door fowls are always in the way, and the unaccustomed visitor, if at all short-sighted, is pretty sure to tumble over some voracious chicken who is scouring the premises for scraps. But the robins, and the rooks, and the swallows are now less obtrusive, for a thin and hungry-looking cat, whose hard and muscular body is clothed with that marvellously silky fur which country cats always possess, has the house in charge, and she is, as Woolven confidentially informs me, 'a reg'lar nineter² for birds, a reg'lar nineter.'

¹ 'Justly'—exactly.

² 'Nineter.' The Rev. Chancellor Parish tells me that he derives this curious Sussex expression from the phrase 'The Devil's own anointed,' thence 'anointed one,' thence 'an'nted,' thence 'nineter.'

The sun, a dazzling golden ball, now climbs slowly above the horizon as the clock far off strikes five, and the moon fades till it is little more distinct than the cloud wreaths which lie round it. Every bush and thicket is by this time alive with the birds who have waited for the sun, and the twittering and fluttering are incessant. At no other time in the day will you see so many. Not only are they fresh from their long rest and hungry, but they have less to fear from men and boys, who are not yet stirring.

A dozen starlings sit and chatter on the farm-house roof, squabbling for places and setting straight their feathers, disordered while sleeping among the leaves of the great chestnut tree hard by. How musical is the fragmentary song of the starling, albeit there is a shade of melancholy in it! A dove, whose late nest with a partly fledged nestling I saw yesterday in a low oak tree in yonder copse, repeats her monotonous ‘*Croo—croo*.’

Four jays fly, screeching hoarsely, across the road, and the green woodpecker laughs in his peculiar fashion as he bustles in among the trees, where he will hunt for breakfast.

What an outrage is the constant slaughter of the jay, one of our prettiest English birds! I questioned Woolven yesterday, who is a great sinner in this respect, and I should like you to take notice of his answer, which I give in his own words, for I took them down at the time under the pretext of sketching his ‘jay trap.’

‘ Well, I reckon¹ I’ve caught twenty-five to thirty jays in a fortnight, for I be rather smart at that. I takes two strodded² sticks like this here, and about so high (indicating some three feet), and I puts ‘em in the ground a liddle in front of a bush say, then I lays two others on ‘em, which goos back to the hedge, puts some cross sticks, and then cuts a thick turf about two foot long, and lays it over the top. I puts liddle bits of hazel dotted round the turf like this, to make a sort of a kind of liddle hedge, then I takes a blackbird’s nest with the eggs, or, better still, a thrush, and cuts a liddle round hole in the turf, and sticks the nest in, and then cuts another liddle hole just in front, and puts one of my clam³ traps in it, and makes it all tidy like, and with that kind of a thing I’ve caught twenty-five or thirty of them jays in a fortnight.’

¹ ‘Reckon.’ This is a very common Sussex expression, generally regarded as an Americanism.

² ‘Strodded.’ A ‘strood’ is a forked branch of a tree.

³ ‘Clam.’ This is pure Saxon, anything which holds or retains being so called.

‘But do the jays do any harm?’

‘Well, no, I can’t say as I’ve ever caught one at it. No, I don’t know as ever I caught one taking my eggs, nor the young birds neither, for the matter of that. But there, they eats eggs, you see, and I can’t b’lieve but what a bird that eats one kind of eggs won’t eat another kind of eggs.’

‘Why don’t you bait the trap with pheasants’ eggs instead of blackbirds’ or thrushes’, Mr. Woolven?’

‘Well, ‘tis a very curus thing, Mr. William, I have baited they traps with pheasants’ eggs, but they’ve never been touched!’

‘Oh, I say, Woolven, this is too monstrous; whatever do you kill them for?’

‘Well, you see, we *knows* they do eat other birds and eggs, and I can’t believe they don’t eat game;’ then thoughtfully, as though half reluctant to support the other side, ‘I must say I’ve sometimes talked to the other keepers when we have our great dinner over at Lewes what the Hunt gives us every year, more than a hundred of us, and I’ve never heerd tell as they’d caught a jay touching game.’ Finally, as if recovering himself and taking a quite impregnable position: ‘But we catches squerrels in the same way—they’re wonderful destructive.’

‘What, to the game?’

‘Well, no, we never catches ‘em at it, but we *knows* they eats birds’ eggs.’

It is idle to argue with Woolven, but his peculiar logic is unhappily shared by a large proportion of his cloth, and so the wanton slaughter of jays, squirrels, and many other equally interesting and delightful wild creatures, which become rarer every year, goes on.

The sun is now well above the hills and the working day begins, a stealthy cat comes along the roadway and disappears through the hedge into the field where the colts are grazing; they too have waited for sunrise before coming away from the sheltering bushes where an hour ago I saw them drowsily standing. The rabbits are creeping out for their early meal, and as I cautiously approach they sit up in the grass with their paws hanging down in front and their long ears pricked to listen, but they soon scuttle away, their white tails bobbing up and down like animated wool tufts. The first humble bee, or ‘dumbledore,’ as the yokels call him, booms along by the bank; but except for this, and one lonely water-beetle in a road-side pool, no insect life is stirring, though the sun is now shining warmly over the fields. The little

busy bee is as yet conspicuous by his absence, and Dr. Watts, who most likely never watched a summer sunrise, should not have eulogised him so emphatically in his Moral Songs for Infant Minds.

Woolven is very proud of his bees and seems to think little of their stings, for they do not trouble him much when he is handling them unless they get ‘ harboured up his sleeve ’ or down his neck, although he admits that when a bee means to sting he has to run for it and hide under his currant bushes until the danger be overpast. As he expresses it, ‘ Sometimes they comes round you, “bee—ee—ee—m—m—m,” quite pleasant like ; but when they comes “I wool, I wool, I WOOL,” then you maun run away, for they wool.’ The best thing, so he says, when you have taken ‘ the spear ’ out, is to rub the place with a leek or a piece of one.

I interrogated him as to whether he had ever heard of the New England custom which Longfellow writes about, of ‘ telling the bees ’ of a death in the household, and he admitted somewhat apologetically, with a glance at his wife, that he had done it himself.

‘ What did he do ? ’

‘ Oh, he went and just tapped the hives with his knuckles.’

‘ Didn’t ye say nothing ? ’ says Mrs. Woolven.

‘ No, don’t know as I did.’

‘ Well, good sakes alive, what was the use, then ? You should ha’ said, “ So-and-so’s dead, tap, tap, tap, So-and-so’s dead.” ’ Not that Mrs. Woolven believed in it, but if you *were* going to tell the bees, why, do it properly.

I am afraid I rather spoilt the flavour of romance which hung round the affair by asking if the bees had flown away when he had forgotten to tell them of a death in his family, and he admitted that nothing had happened when he had forgotten. At this Mrs. Woolven, of whom he stands somewhat in awe, laughed—a very sarcastic, unkind sort of laugh. Now, with the remembrance of certain sentimental passages in his career which in a moment of confidence he had spoken of (Mrs. Woolven being absent), I thought I could interpret that unpleasant laugh. Woolven has been married three times, and I fancy that he must have told the bees when his first wife died, but have omitted so to do on the second occasion. Of these calamities he spoke thus to me : ‘ Ye see, I was about nineteen when I fust married, and my wife, well, she was a fine ’ooman surelye, but she went off in about a year in one

of these here galloping consumptions, and it made me feel middlin' bad, I can tell 'e; I didn't think as ever I could look at a 'oman again. Well, arter a time I found another one and we lived man and wife for pretty nigh thirty year and then *she* died ; and then I married this other 'oman, for I can't get along nohow without a 'oman to do for me.'

Such were his words, but the tone, the expression, the covert glances at the present Mrs. Woolven, who was feeding her fowls just beyond earshot, are all essential parts of the narrative, and cannot be reproduced. Still, for all that, Master Woolven is a very good sort, and he has lived a strong, active, hard-working life in this out-of-the-way country place, man and boy, for over sixty years, seeing these woods and fields at all seasons and in all weathers, by night under the stars, and in the dark with the autumn rains, by day in the winter snows and the summer sunshine. Little of country lore and woodcraft is strange or new to him, and though he shoots and traps and kills as is the manner of his kind, something of the charm and glamour of the wild life of the woods has entered into his words and ways.

The busy day is now well begun, and the sounds of labour come on the summer air from far and near—pleasant, cheerful sounds of men's voices and of wholesome toil ; but let him who will see Nature undisturbed, and surprise something of her secret, rise at the first faint glowing of the east and walk abroad till the sun rise.

EDWARD CLAYTON.

The Devil's Round.

A TALE OF FLEMISH GOLF.

THE following story, translated by Miss Isabel Bruce from *Le Grand Choleur* of M. Charles Deulin (*Contes du Roi Gambrinus*), gives a great deal of information about French and Flemish golf. As any reader will see, this ancient game represents a stage of evolution between golf and hockey. The object is to strike a ball, in as few strokes as possible, to a given point; but, after every three strokes, the opponent is allowed to *décholer*, or make one stroke back, or into a hazard. Here the element of hockey comes in. Get rid of this element, let each man hit his own ball, and, in place of striking to a point—say, the cemetery gate—let men ‘putt’ into holes, and the Flemish game becomes golf. It is of great antiquity. Ducange, in his Lexicon of Low Latin, gives *Choulla*, French *choule*=‘*Globulus ligneus qui clava propellitur*’—a wooden ball struck with a club. The head of the club was of iron (cf. *crossare*). This is borne out by a miniature in a missal of 1504, which represents peasants playing *choule* with clubs very like niblicks. Ducange quotes various MS. references of 1353, 1357, and other dates older by a century than our earliest Scotch references to golf. At present the game is played in Belgium with a strangely-shaped lofting-iron and a ball of beechwood. M. Zola (*Germinial*, p. 310) represents his miners playing *chole*, or *choulle*, and says that they hit drives of more than 500 yards. Experiments made at Wimbledon with a Belgian club sent over by M. Charles Michel suggest that M. Zola has over-estimated the distance. But M. Zola and M. Deulin agree in making the players *run* after the ball. M. Henri Gaidoz adds that a similar game, called *soule*, is played in various departments of France. He refers to Laisnel de la Salle. The name *chole*

may be connected with German *Kolbe*, and *golf* may be the form which this word would assume in a Celtic language. All this makes golf very old ; but the question arises, Are the 'holes' to which golfers play of Scotch or of Dutch origin ? There are several old Flemish pictures of golf; do any of them show players in the act of 'holing out' ? There is said to be such a picture at Neuchâtel.

A. LANG.

I.

ONCE upon a time there lived at the hamlet of Coq, near Condé-sur-l'Escaut, a wheelwright called Roger. He was a good fellow, untiring both at his sport and at his toil, and as skilful in lofting a ball with a stroke of his club as in putting together a cartwheel. Everyone knows that the game of golf consists in driving towards a given point a ball of cherrywood with a club which has for head a sort of little iron shoe without a heel.

For my part, I do not know a more amusing game ; and when the country is almost cleared of the harvest, men, women, children, everybody, drives his ball as you please, and there is nothing cheerier than to see them filing on a Sunday like a flight of starlings across potato fields and ploughed lands.

II.

WELL, one Tuesday, it was a Shrove Tuesday, the wheelwright of Coq laid aside his plane, and was slipping on his blouse to go and drink his can of beer at Condé, when two strangers came in, club in hand.

'Would you put a new shaft to my club, master ?' said one of them.

'What are you asking me, friends ? A day like this ! I wouldn't give the smallest stroke of the chisel for a brick of gold. Besides, does anyone play golf on Shrove Tuesday ? You had much better go and see the mummers tumbling in the high street of Condé.'

'We take no interest in the tumbling of mummers,' replied the stranger. 'We have challenged each other at golf and we want to play it out. Come, you won't refuse to help us, you who are said to be one of the finest players of the country ?'

'If it is a match, that is different,' said Roger.

He turned up his sleeves, hooked on his apron, and in the twinkling of an eye had adjusted the shaft.

'How much do I owe you?' asked the unknown, drawing out his purse.

'Nothing at all, faith; it is not worth while.'

The stranger insisted, but in vain.

III.

'You are too honest, i' faith,' said he to the wheelwright, 'for me to be in your debt. I will grant you the fulfilment of three wishes.'

'Don't forget to wish what is *best*,' added his companion.

At these words the wheelwright smiled incredulously.

'Are you not a couple of the loafers of Capelette?' he asked, with a wink.

The idlers of the crossways of Capelette were considered the wildest wags in Condé.

'Whom do you take us for?' replied the unknown in a tone of severity, and with his club he touched an axle, made of iron, which instantly changed into one of pure silver.

'Who are you, then,' cried Roger, 'that your word is as good as ready money?'

'I am St. Peter, and my companion is St. Antony, the patron of golfers.'

'Take the trouble to walk in, gentlemen,' said the wheelwright of Coq; and he ushered the two saints into the back parlour. He offered them chairs, and went to draw a jug of beer in the cellar. They clinked their glasses together, and after each had lit his pipe:

'Since you are so good, sir saints,' said Roger, 'as to grant me the accomplishment of three wishes, know that for a long while I have desired three things. I wish, first of all, that whoever seats himself upon the elm-trunk at my door may not be able to rise without my permission. I like company and it bores me to be always alone.'

St. Peter shook his head and St. Antony nudged his client.

IV.

'WHEN I play a game of cards, on Sunday evening, at the "Fighting Cock,"' continued the wheelwright, 'it is no sooner nine o'clock than the garde-champêtre comes to chuck us out. I desire that

whoever shall have his feet on my leathern apron cannot be driven from the place where I shall have spread it.'

St. Peter shook his head, and St. Antony, with a solemn air, repeated :

'Don't forget what is *best*.'

'What is *best*,' replied the wheelwright of Coq, nobly, 'is to be the first golfer in the world. Every time I find my master at golf it turns my blood as black as the inside of the chimney. So I want a club that will carry the ball as high as the belfry of Condé, and will infallibly win me my match.'

'So be it,' said St. Peter.

'You would have done better,' said St. Antony, 'to have asked for your eternal salvation.'

'Bah!' replied the other. 'I have plenty of time to think of that; I am not yet greasing my boots for the long journey.'

The two saints went out and Roger followed them, curious to be present at such a rare game; but suddenly, near the Chapel of St. Antony, they disappeared.

The wheelwright then went to see the mummers tumbling in the high street of Condé.

When he returned, towards midnight, he found at the corner of his door the desired club. To his great surprise it was only a bad little iron head attached to a wretched worn-out shaft. Nevertheless he took the gift of St. Peter and put it carefully away.

V.

NEXT morning the Condéens scattered in crowds over the country, to play golf, eat red herrings, and drink beer, so as to scatter the fumes of wine from their heads and to revive after the fatigues of the Carnival. The wheelwright of Coq came too, with his miserable club, and made such fine strokes that all the players left their games to see him play. The following Sunday he proved still more expert; little by little his fame spread through the land. From ten leagues round the most skilful players hastened to come and be beaten, and it was then that he was named the Great Golfer.

He passed the whole Sunday in golfing, and in the evening he rested himself by playing a game of matrimony at the 'Fighting Cock.' He spread his apron under the feet of the players, and the devil himself could not have put them out of the tavern, much less the rural policeman. On Monday morning he stopped the

pilgrims who were going to worship at Notre Dame de Bon Secours ; he induced them to rest themselves upon his *causeuse*, and did not let them go before he had confessed them well.

In short, he led the most agreeable life that a good Fleming can imagine, and only regretted one thing—namely, that he had not wished it might last for ever.

VI.

WELL, it happened one day that the strongest player of Mons, who was called Paternostre, was found dead on the edge of a bunker. His head was broken, and near him was his niblick, red with blood.

They could not tell who had done his business, and as Paternostre often said that at golf he neither feared man nor devil, it occurred to them that he had challenged Mynheer van Belzébuth, and that as a punishment for this he had knocked him on the head. Mynheer van Belzébuth is, as everyone knows, the greatest gamester that there is upon or under the earth, but the game he particularly affects is golf. When he goes his round in Flanders one always meets him, club in hand, like a true Fleming.

The wheelwright of Coq was very fond of Paternostre, who, next to himself, was the best golfer in the country. He went to his funeral with some golfers from the hamlets of Coq, La Cigogne, and La Queue de l'Ayache.

On returning from the cemetery they went to the tavern to drink, as they say, to the memory of the dead,¹ and there they lost themselves in talk about the noble game of golf. When they separated, in the dusk of evening :

‘A good journey to you,’ said the Belgian players, ‘and may St. Antony, the patron of golfers, preserve you from meeting the devil on the way !’

‘What do I care for the devil ?’ replied Roger. ‘If he challenged me I should soon beat him !’

The companions trotted from tavern to tavern without misadventure ; but the wolf-bell had long tolled for retiring in the belfrey of Condé when they returned each one to his own den.

VII.

As he was putting the key into the lock the wheelwright thought he heard a shout of mocking laughter. He turned, and saw in the darkness a man six feet high, who again burst out laughing.

¹ *Boire la cervelle du mort.*

'What are you laughing at?' said he, crossly.

'At what? Why, at the *aplomb* with which you boasted a little while ago that you would dare measure yourself against the devil.'

'Why not, if he challenged me?'

'Very well, my master, bring your clubs. I challenge you!' said Mynheer van Belzébuth, for it was himself. Roger recognised him by a certain odour of sulphur that always hangs about his majesty.

'What shall the stake be?' he asked resolutely.

'Your soul?'

'Against what?'

'Whatever you please.'

The wheelwright reflected.

'What have you there in your sack?'

'My spoils of the week.'

'Is the soul of Paternostre among them?'

'To be sure! and those of five other golfers; dead, like him, without confession.'

'I play you my soul against that of Paternostre.'

'Done!'

VIII.

THE two adversaries repaired to the adjoining field and chose for their goal the door of the cemetery of Condé.¹ Belzébuth teed a ball on a frozen heap, after which he said, according to custom:

'From here, as you lie, in how many turns of three strokes will you run in?'

'In two,' replied the great golfer.

And his adversary was not a little surprised, for from there to the cemetery was nearly a quarter of a league.

'But how shall we see the ball?' continued the wheelwright.

'True!' said Belzébuth.

He touched the ball with his club, and it shone suddenly in the dark like an immense glowworm.

'Fore!' cried Roger.

He hit the ball with the head of his club, and it rose to the sky like a star going to rejoin its sisters. In three strokes it crossed three-quarters of the distance.

'That is good!' said Belzébuth, whose astonishment redoubled.

'My turn to play now!'²

¹ They play to points, not holes.

² After each three strokes the opponent has one hit back, or into a hazard.

With one stroke of the club he drove the ball over the roofs of Coq nearly to Maison Blanche, half a league away. The blow was so violent that the iron struck fire against a pebble.

'Good St. Antony! I am lost, unless you come to my aid,' murmured the wheelwright of Coq.

He struck tremblingly; but, though his arm was uncertain, the club seemed to have acquired a new vigour. At the second stroke the ball went as if of itself and hit the door of the cemetery.

'By the horns of my grandfather!' cried Belzébuth, it shall not be said that I have been beaten by a son of that fool Adam. Give me my revenge.'

'What shall we play for?'

'Your soul and that of Paternostre against the souls of two golfers.'

IX.

THE devil played up, 'pressing' furiously; his club blazed at each stroke with showers of sparks. The ball flew from Condé to Bon-Secours, to Pernwelz, to Leuze. Once it spun away to Tournai, six leagues from there.

It left behind a luminous tail like a comet, and the two golfers followed, so to speak, on its track. Roger was never able to understand how he ran, or rather flew so fast, and without fatigue.

In short, he did not lose a single game, and won the souls of the six defunct golfers. Belzébuth rolled his eyes like an angry tom-cat.

'Shall we go on?' said the wheelwright of Coq.

'No,' replied the other; 'they expect me at the Witches' Sabbath on the hill of Copiémont.'

'That brigand,' said he aside, 'is capable of filching all my game.'

And he vanished.

Returned home, the Great Golfer shut up his souls in a sack and went to bed, enchanted to have beaten Mynheer van Belzébuth.

X.

Two years after the wheelwright of Coq received a visit which he little expected. An old man, tall, thin and yellow, came into the workshop carrying a scythe on his shoulder.

'Are you bringing me your scythe to haft anew, master?'

'No, faith, *my* scythe is never unhafted.'

'Then how can I serve you ?'

'By following me : your hour is come.'

'The devil !' said the great golfer, 'could you not wait a little till I have finished this wheel ?'

'Be it so ! I have done hard work to-day, and I have well earned a smoke.'

'In that case, master, sit down there on the *causeuse*. I have at your service some famous tobacco at seven petards the pound.'

'That's good, faith ; make haste.'

And Death lit his pipe and seated himself at the door on the elm trunk.

Laughing in his sleeve, the wheelwright of Coq returned to his work. At the end of a quarter of an hour Death called to him :

'Ho ! faith, will you soon have finished ?'

The wheelwright turned a deaf ear and went on planing, singing :

'Attendez-moi sur l'orme ;
Vous m'attendrez longtemps.'

'I don't think he hears me,' said Death. 'Ho ! friend, are you ready ?'

'Va-t-en voir s'ils viennent, Jean,
Va-t-en voir s'ils viennent,'

replied the singer.

'Would the brute laugh at me ?' said Death to himself.

And he tried to rise.

To his great surprise he could not detach himself from the *causeuse*. He then understood that he was the sport of a superior power.

'Let us see,' he said to Roger. 'What will you take to let me go ? Do you wish me to prolong your life ten years ?'

'J'ai de bon tabac dans ma tabatière,'

sang the great golfer.

'Will you take twenty years ?'

'Il pleut, il pleut, bergère ;
Rentre tes blancs moutons.'

'Will you take fifty, wheelwright ?—may the devil admire you !' The wheelwright of Coq intoned :

'Bon voyage, cher Dumollet,
A Saint-Malo débarquez sans naufrage.'

In the meanwhile the clock of Condé had just struck four, and the boys were coming out of school. The sight of this great dry heron of a creature who struggled on the *causeuse*, like a devil in a holy-water pot, surprised and soon delighted them.

Never suspecting that when seated at the door of the old, Death watches the young, they thought it funny to put out their tongues at him, singing in chorus :

‘ Bon voyage, cher Dumollet,
A Saint-Malo débarquez sans naufrage.’

‘ Will you take a hundred years ? ’ yelled Death.

‘ Hein ? How ? What ? Were you not speaking of an extension of a hundred years ? I accept with all my heart, master ; but let us understand : I am not such a fool as to ask for the lengthening of my old age.’

‘ Then what do you want ? ’

‘ From old age I only ask the experience which it gives by degrees. “ Si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait ! ” says the proverb. I wish to preserve for a hundred years the strength of a young man, and to acquire the knowledge of an old one.

‘ So be it,’ said Death, ‘ I shall return this day a hundred years.’

‘ Bon voyage, cher Dumollet,
A Saint-Malo débarquez sans naufrage.’

XI.

THE great golfer began a new life. At first he enjoyed perfect happiness, which was increased by the certainty of its not ending for a hundred years. Thanks to his experience, he so well understood the management of his affairs that he could leave his mallet and shut up shop.¹

He experienced, nevertheless, an annoyance he had not foreseen. His wonderful skill at golf ended by frightening the players whom he had at first delighted, and was the cause of his never finding anyone who would play against him.

He therefore quitted the canton and set out on his travels over French Flanders, Belgium, and all the greens where the noble game of golf is held in honour. At the end of twenty years he returned to Coq to be admired by a new generation of golfers, after which he departed to return twenty years later.

¹ *Vivre à porte close.*

Alas ! in spite of its apparent charm, this existence before long became a burden to him. Besides that, it bored him to win on every occasion ; he was tired of passing like the Wandering Jew through generations, and of seeing the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of his friends grow old, and die out. He was constantly reduced to making new friendships which were undone by the age or death of his fellows ; all changed around him, he only did not change.

He grew impatient of this eternal youthfulness which condemned him to taste the same pleasures for ever, and he sometimes longed to know the calmer joys of old age. One day he caught himself at his looking-glass, examining whether his hair had not begun to grow white ; nothing seemed so beautiful to him now as the snow on the forehead of the old.

XII.

IN addition to this, experience soon made him so wise that he was no longer amused at anything. If sometimes in the tavern he had a fancy for making use of his apron to pass the night at cards : ‘What is the good of this excess?’ whispered experience ; ‘it is not sufficient to be unable to shorten one’s days, one must also avoid making oneself ill.’

He reached the point of refusing himself the pleasure of drinking his pint and smoking his pipe. Why, indeed, plunge into dissipations which enervate the body and dull the brain ?

The wretch went further and gave up golf! Experience convinced him that the game is a dangerous one, which overheats one, and is eminently adapted to produce colds, catarrhs, rheumatism, and inflammation of the lungs.

Besides, what is the use, and what great glory is it to be reputed the first golfer in the world ?

Of what use is glory itself ? A vain hope, vain as the smoke of a pipe.

When experience had thus bereft him one by one of his delusions, the unhappy golfer became mortally weary. He saw that he had deceived himself, that delusion has its price, and that the greatest charm of youth is perhaps its inexperience.

He thus arrived at the term agreed on in the contract, and as he had not had a paradise here below, he sought through his hardly-acquired wisdom a clever way of conquering one above,

XIII.

DEATH found him at Coq at work in his shop. Experience had at least taught him that work is the most lasting of pleasures.

‘Are you ready?’ said Death.

‘I am.’

He took his club, put a score of balls in his pocket, threw his sack over his shoulder, and buckled his gaiters without taking off his apron.

‘What do you want your club for?’

‘Why, to golf in paradise with my patron St. Antony.’

‘Do you fancy, then, that I am going to conduct you to paradise?’

‘You must, as I have half-a-dozen souls to carry there, that I once saved from the clutches of Belzébuth.’

‘Better have saved your own. *En route, cher Dumollet!*’

The great golfer saw that the old reaper bore him a grudge, and that he was going to conduct him to the paradise of the lost.¹

Indeed a quarter of an hour later the two travellers knocked at the gate of hell.

‘Toc, toc!’

‘Who is there?’

‘The wheelwright of Coq,’ said the great golfer.

‘Don’t open the door,’ cried Belzébuth; ‘that rascal wins at every turn; he is capable of depopulating my empire.’

Roger laughed in his sleeve.

‘Oh! you are not saved,’ said Death. ‘I am going to take you where you won’t be cold either.’

Quicker than a beggar would have emptied a poor’s box they were in purgatory.

‘Toc—toc!’

‘Who is there?’

‘The wheelwright of Coq,’ said the great golfer.

‘But he is in a state of mortal sin,’ cried the angel on duty.

‘Take him away from here—he can’t come in.’

‘I cannot, all the same, let him linger between heaven and earth,’ said Death; ‘I shall shunt him back to Coq.’

‘Where they will take me for a ghost. Thank you! is there not still paradise?’

¹ *Noires glaives.*

XIV.

THEY were there at the end of a short hour,

'Toe, toe!'

'Who is there?'

'The wheelwright of Coq,' said the great golfer.

'Ah! my lad,' said St. Peter half opening the door, 'I am really grieved. St. Antony told you long ago you had better ask for the salvation of your soul.'

'That is true, St. Peter,' replied Roger with a sheepish air. 'And how is he, that blessed St. Antony? Could I not come in for one moment to return the visit he once paid me?'

'Why, here he comes,' said St. Peter, throwing the door wide open.

In the twinkling of an eye the sly golfer had flung himself into paradise, unhooked his apron, let it fall to the ground, and seated himself down on it.

'Good morning, St. Antony,' said he with a fine salute. 'You see I had plenty of time to think of paradise, for here we are!'

'What! You here!' cried St. Antony.

'Yes, I and my company,' replied Roger, opening his sack and scattering on the carpet the souls of the six golfers.

'Will you have the goodness to pack right off, all of you?'

'Impossible,' said the great golfer showing his apron.

'The rogue has made game of us,' said St. Antony. 'Come, St. Peter, in memory of our game of golf, let him in with his souls. Besides, he has had his purgatory on earth.'

'It is not a very good precedent,' murmured St. Peter.

'Bah!' replied Roger, 'if we have a few good golfers in paradise, where is the harm?'

XV.

THUS, after having lived long, golfed much and drunk many cans of beer, the wheelwright of Coq called the Great Golfer was admitted to paradise; but I advise no one to copy him, for it is not quite the right way to go, and St. Peter might not always be so compliant, though great allowances must be made for golfers.

ISABEL BRUCE.

What High Wages Mean.

WHEN we see the misery that arises from low wages—the shortened lives, the wretched homes, the daily slavery of the ill-paid, our first and natural thought is, that the cure for all these things lies in a rise of wages. But as we go on thinking about the matter we begin to see that there are complications; we perceive that perhaps, if men are paid more, there will be fewer of them employed, and that the advantage gained by those at work will be at the expense of others who will be thrown out, and so, in the long run, at the expense of the whole country. It is quite clear that before we take any active steps to get people better paid we ought to make ourselves quite sure what the effect of that better payment will really be.

The first effect of a rise of wages in any trade will almost certainly be to diminish activity in that trade.

There are, of course, hundreds of instances where a rise of wages has accompanied increased activity; but in these cases profits have risen also, and generally to a greater extent; the *proportional* rate of wages has not risen. Moreover, even in these cases it is probably often true that the trade would have been even more active if wages could have been kept from rising. Let us consider why it is that the first effect of a rise of wages should be to diminish activity in the particular trade affected. The additional money paid to the wage-earner must come out of somebody else's pocket; and that somebody else must be either the employer or the consumer. If the selling price remains the same and the wage-earner receives more, then the wage-payer receives less profit. If the profits of employers in any trade are seriously diminished, there will be a tendency on the part of employers to put their money into any other trade where profits may be higher; that is to say, the activity of that particular trade will tend to diminish. But this immediate effect will tend ultimately to counteract itself; the very increase of numbers in

the more profitable trade will presently bring down its profits and so diminish its extra attractiveness. Roughly speaking, the rate of profit—the return to capital—is always tending to an equal level in all trades; and it is probably true that that level is always falling. Wherever this equalising tendency seems to be arrested there will be found to exist either some check upon unlimited competition, or some especial risk which virtually counterbalances the higher profit. So that the diminution of activity in any trade, in so far as it depends upon the action of employers, tends to cure itself by the natural action of competition. It also tends to cure itself in another way. When wages rise, employers find it worth their while to set up improved machinery, so as to increase the output per man; that is to say, the work is done in the least wasteful manner, and often the cost of production may be thus actually lowered at the same time that wages rise. The selling price may then also fall, and the cheap sale may actually increase the demand and lead to a greater instead of a less activity in that particular trade. This change, however, takes a little time. The *first* effect, if the selling price remains the same, will be a lessening of activity.

But it may be that the employer, when he raises wages, also raises his selling price. His profits in that case remain the same; it is the consumer who pays the additional wage. Now this may affect the buyer in either one of two ways: either he will pay more money for the same number of articles, or he will pay the same amount of money for a less number of articles. In the first case there will be no diminution of activity in the particular trade concerned. On the other hand, the consumer, if he spends more in this direction, will be likely to spend less in another, so that probably there will be a diminution of activity in some other trade. The second case, however, is that which will generally arise: the same money will be paid for less goods. That means that less goods will be wanted—demand will fall off. Thus, in another way, activity in the particular trade will be diminished. Thus it does unquestionably appear that a rise of wages (except where unusual circumstances have caused a rush of trade) does for a time diminish the activity of the trade in which it occurs.

But if we conclude from this that a general rise of wages will cause a general diminution in the activity of trade as a whole, we shall make a very grave error. It is quite possible that an exactly contrary result will follow, and that very quickly. Before deciding what will be the effect upon the general trade of the

country we must ask ourselves—What becomes of the money which has gone from the pocket of the employer or the consumer into that of the wage-earner? What will the wage-earner do with it? And how will he spend it? It is clearly possible that he may spend it in such a way as to cause rather a general increase than a general diminution of activity.

At this point I am quite sure there will be found some pessimist reader to declare that the trade whose activity will be most largely increased will be that of the publican; but I think this pessimist will be wrong, because in fact it is rather the ill-paid than the well-paid artisan who drinks to excess. Of course there are individual men who earn good wages and yet are heavy drinkers, but any *class* of workers almost invariably grows less drunken as it grows better paid. It is to the man who lives with his family in one room, not to the man who has a comfortable parlour, that the public-house looks so attractive.

As a general rule the wage-earner will spend his extra money upon additional comfort for himself and his family; he will buy more and better food, more and better clothes, more and better furniture; not improbably he will live in a better house, and he will extend his recreations. The chances are that he will spend a portion of it in belonging to a club or a friendly society. We may say without much doubt that he will do these things, because we have plenty of fairly paid artisans among us, and we can observe for ourselves that these are the ways in which they spend their money. The money which was spent before by the employer or the consumer will be spent now by the wage-earner, and it will go to promote activity in those trades which minister to his needs; that is to say, on the whole, to the trades which produce necessaries rather than to those which produce luxuries. The demand for silk plush and egg-shell china may diminish; but the demand for rough cloth and stout earthenware will increase.

It will be into these trades that masters will now put the capital which they may have withdrawn from the others; and there is no reason at all to suppose that they will derive less profit from them; while to the country at large it is admittedly more advantageous that capital and labour should be expended upon producing necessaries than luxuries.

The secretary of a miners' trade union said to me recently, 'The farmers all round know what good pay for the men means to them, and they regard me as their best friend. When wages are low they have no sale at any price for their eggs and butter.'

That one instance shows us what really happens. Trade is not lessened, but diverted. The spending power of a poorer class is enlarged, and the trade is proportionately altered to meet the changed demand. Higher wages mean that more work is done for working men. The working man, therefore, does really and permanently gain by receiving higher wages; we need have no fear that by helping him to get better paid we are in the long run doing him an injury.

'But, then,' some one will say to me, 'how about foreign competition?' Well, the question is a serious one, and needs to be very carefully considered.

We are between two dangers. If we raise the cost of production by giving high wages to our workers, we may be undersold by countries in which the workers are worse off; if we lower the cost of production by giving low wages to our workers, we cause a constant sore of poverty which is (apart from all questions of justice or humanity) a continual national danger and a continual national expense. Moreover, poverty on the part of the working-class means the decline of skilled work. It lowers the health and intelligence of the worker, and it makes parents unable to afford the expense and delay of training for their children. Where a father does not earn enough to keep his children properly fed, the children must for their own sakes be put to work that will bring in a few shillings immediately; that is to say, to some work that needs no learning. In other words, the child must become an unskilled instead of a skilled worker. And this, in its turn, brings us in danger of losing our trade. Not cheapness only, but good work commands the market. And if it be true, as we are assured, that America is the competitor in comparison with whom England is chiefly losing ground, it would appear that even at present we are in as much danger of being outdone by our better-paid as by our worse-paid neighbours. We may, in short, lose trade either because our work is too dear, or because it is not so good as other people's. If we pay our workers ill, our work cannot be of the best; if we pay them well, it may not be cheap. We must compete either along the line of cheapness, or along the line of goodness; and whichever line we choose we must take care, on the one hand, that we are not *too* bad, and on the other that we are not *too* dear. Along the line of cheapness we are likely to be distanced by the Chinese, the Polish Jew, the German and Italian peasants, and the Hindoo; and we can only compete with these races by bringing our own workers to their standards. Along the

line of goodness we once held the market, and probably might hold it again. But we can only hold it by raising higher the standard of comfort (which means the standard of health and intelligence) of our workers. We must remember that these are essential factors in the production of highly-skilled work. To prevent our highly-skilled work from being too costly we must try and save expense on other points; we must be always improving our methods, always keeping one step ahead of our competitors, to whom, as well as to ourselves, each fresh step will then be a gain. We must either keep our trade in this way, or we must keep it by developing in our midst a class of helots, degraded labour slaves, who will consent to live on the lowest level possible to humanity. In other words, we must keep our foreign trade, either by paying our workers better, or by paying them worse than those of other nations; if we pay them worse, we shall have a constant burden and a constant terror in our midst; we shall deepen the sense which presses upon all of us in our daily comings and goings, of an industrial world out of joint, and of a gnawing social injustice that frets the conscience of the whole nation. And even so, it is a question whether the Chinaman and the Hindoo will not continue to be able to live lower still and so outbid us. Moreover, we shall run a constant risk of revolt and disturbance, which are the greatest possible danger and interruption to the regular course of trade. The long-suffering of the English poor is amazing, but it is not, probably, quite unlimited. No national life can be stable while large numbers of the people live in great misery. The best safeguard of national peace is a general distribution of comfort and independence. And the safest paths towards this state of security are good education and good wages for the workers. Low wages lead by a path of intolerable suffering to an inevitable downfall. On the ascending path there may be dangers too—but they are the less dangers, and they will be faced by men fitter to meet them.

CLEMENTINA BLACK.

A Musical Triumph.

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,
Told them something?

— R. BROWNING.

PART I.

YOU went up three or four steps, making your way as best you could between casks of sour-looking plums and apples, which, if you would but consent to ‘take them as they rose,’ or, in other words, as they naturally presented themselves, and not pick and choose, you could buy cheap. You pushed aside some festoons of dangling brushes, were gently bumped by a string of Portugal onions, caught glimpses of photographs of various beautiful places in the district as you displaced these things, and at last effected an entrance into Archibald Brown’s shop. This was the post office, telegraph office, and general-store shop of the village of Selswyke Bay, in Yorkshire. Nowhere else within a radius of seven miles could you buy a dress, a bit of ‘elegant trousering,’ a cheese, or a good piece of ham or bacon. Apples and plums might be had for the begging or stealing by the tender youth of Selswyke, and were so had; but nowhere else could clothes and provisions and everything wanted in a house be bought. The inhabitants of Selswyke were unusually well endowed, being, when farmers either on a large or small scale, in the habit of saying that they had beef, mutton, ham, eggs, chickens, and ducks, ‘within themselves,’ and yet this shop was needed. If it had been in Scotland its owner would probably have been known as Archie A’things; here he was ceremoniously styled Mr. Archibald Brown; and being a man of genial, but thoroughly respectful, manners and much information, his shop was abundantly resorted to by persons who sometimes did not want much more than a few words with him. The squire of the neighbourhood—a proud man with more pedigree than rent-roll, but more rent-roll than sufficed to keep up the dignified state in which his life was spent—was there now. He had gone in to buy some post-cards, and, being fully six feet high, had not got in without becoming aware that Mr. Brown had Portugal onions for sale. He had bought his post-cards and had remained for five

minutes' talk with Mr. Brown about some local matter. A telegraphic message was being transmitted. Mr. Brown was unaffected by this. Squire Rokewood found its incisive little clicks a great hindrance to conversation.

'You seem to let those people at the other end of the wires work away as they like without taking any notice of them,' said he.

'The message is not for us, sir. It is a message from Scorton to Wragborough.'

Wragborough was a town that was ten miles away.

'Really! And you hear the clicking of the Scorton message as it goes! I did not know that you could do that. Then can any of the other offices between Scorton and Wragborough hear it too?'

'It's heard just the same in every one of them, sir.'

'I had no idea of that; but, after all, I suppose none of the offices know what is being flashed along the wires but the one that the message is intended for, and that even the one it is intended for doesn't know what the message is until it has been worked off on to the tape?'

'Oh, yes, they do—that is, they might—for in those offices people are mostly too busy to think of a message that is not intended for them. But it is astonishing how soon even the shopboys learn to distinguish the sound of the stroke made by each letter.'

'I had no conception that our messages were such public property,' said Mr. Rokewood. 'I shall word mine much more carefully in future. But, Mr. Brown, do you really mean to tell me that you, standing here talking to me, could, if you chose to listen, hear what that message is?'

'Of course I could, sir. I have heard some of it.'

'What was it?'

'You must please to excuse me, sir. Such information as that must be kept to myself—it is my duty! However it is a common message enough, and not in the least worth knowing.'

'And you say that the shop-boys can read the messages by ear, too. Can that boy of yours do it?' Mr. Rokewood was referring to a remarkably stupid-looking little fellow, who, to the distraction of a woman in a hurry, was struggling with the management of the weights and scales.

'Yes, sir; he is a long way quicker in understanding by hearing than I am.'

Mr. Brown at this moment was called away to the inner shop to fill in some money orders, and receive some Savings' Bank deposits, and the squire, who had not got over his astonishment

at that stupid boy being able to interpret a telegram by using his ears—what enormous ears they were, by-the-bye—said to him, ‘Can you really do as much as your master says you can?’

‘Oo, ay, sir,’ replied the boy carelessly, and no customers being there, began to amuse himself by piling up the weights in the form of a pyramid, with an amount of noise that was simply astounding. Suddenly he darted off to the window—a signal had informed him that a message was now going to be sent to that office. Dexterously adjusting the tape so as to be ready to receive the communication, he signalled that he was prepared, and waited to see the message print itself off.

‘No,’ cried Squire Rokewood, imperatively, ‘come to the other end of the shop this moment! I want to see if you really can tell what this message is, just by hearing.’

The squire was the squire, and without a second’s hesitation the boy obeyed. Mr. Rokewood, too, had no hesitation—his strong desire to know if what had been said to him could be true, made him forget that he had no right to try to possess himself of knowledge not intended for him.

‘Go on!’ he exclaimed impatiently, for the clicking had stopped, and the boy was not saying a word.

On hearing this command he made some of the uncouth sounds which in his rank of life betoken suppressed laughter. The squire felt inclined to shake him, and showed it.

‘I can’t help it, sir. It’s such a queer kind of message for anybody to send,’ said the boy.

‘Oh, never mind that! Tell me what it is, and then I will have that tape examined to see if you have told me right. I don’t believe you can tell me!’

“*You perfect pest! What train?*” That’s what it is! It’s from Agnes—her name is Agnes.”

The squire laughed loudly—he was such a stiff young squire, too, in a general way, and never could unbend. The boy grinned from ear to ear, and wished all messages were as funny as this.

‘You are inventing it!’ exclaimed the squire, with a sudden suspicion that his dignity was being tampered with by an oaf of a boy in a general-store shop.

‘Nay, you can see for yourself what’s there,’ answered the boy, going to the window and holding up the delicate tape. The squire, however, could see nothing but a very orderly arrangement of lines and dashes. The boy could evidently read this with perfect ease, and was once more in a wide-spread grin of delight. As for the squire, he could do nothing but wonder that

prime ministers were not habitually chosen from the ranks of telegraph boys.

'Jack! Jack! Mr. Rokewood! sir, what are you doing?' cried Mr. Brown, who had returned to the shop to find these two poring over the message, and, forgetful of all else, though a woman was standing there by the counter, with a penny laid on it ready for her intended purchase, and two boys were clamorous for rockets.

'Go and get the rockets, Jack,' cried Mr. Brown, and then he went to see what the woman wanted. She looked so used to be kept waiting that he felt obliged to attend to her at once. She, however, with her north country habit of expecting to have her wishes divined, did not speak, but pushed her penny nearer to him. He held up a square of soap.

'Soap!' she exclaimed contemptuously, 'and mother weshed o' Monday!' He interrogatively touched a jar of treacle.

'Treacle! and me nothing to put it in!' Foiled again, he pushed a screw of pepper to her. She grinned, and saying, 'I thought I'd have to tell yer,' took it and disappeared. Then Mr. Brown went to the window, and there was annoyance in his face.

'Forgive me,' said the squire, 'I did not think what I was doing. I only wanted to know if that boy of yours really could have such well-trained ears as you said.'

Squires have to be forgiven, and this squire promised not to err again, so Mr. Brown took up the message and read it. He, too, looked amused, but methodically wrote it out on its sheet of pink paper, put it into its burnt sienna envelope, addressed it to Robert Fairfax, Esq., The Rokewood Arms, and told the boy to take it there at once. 'And never let me find you reading the telegrams off to anyone again, or it will be worse for you!' he added.

'Did he really read it? I suspected he was only amusing himself at my expense,' said the squire, but Mr. Brown assured him it was not so.

Five minutes after the boy had gone, a bright, handsome, fair-haired young fellow of eighteen or nineteen, with sketching folio strapped to his back, and a large white umbrella under his arm, came hurriedly in and asked if there were any letters for Mr. Robert Fairfax.

'No letters, sir, but a telegram came for you a few minutes ago. I have sent it to the inn.'

'Oh, but I don't want to go all the way back to the inn, I am late for my effect already. Do you think you could tell me what the telegram said?'

'I could write it out again,' replied Mr. Brown with much dignity. He did so, and handed the copy to Mr. Fairfax, who read his sister's message, smiled, and without bestowing one glance on those who were watching him with such amused interest, or knowing that they were doing it, went to the desk, filled up a telegram form with the words, '*Patience, idiot! Letter sent. Will meet six train,*' handed it to Mr. Brown with the money for it, and departed. His telegram was addressed to Miss Agnes Fairfax—Agnes was therefore his sister. Somehow or other, Mr. Rokewood became a partaker in this telegram, too, and the consequence was that, being in the neighbourhood of the station that evening with nothing particular to do, he found himself sufficiently interested in Agnes to hang about in the lane through which she must pass when she left the station. Of necessity she must be a foot passenger, for there were no flys or omnibuses at Selswyke. He did not go quite so far as the station, but waited on the rough cinder-path outside, leaning against some untrimmed railing, and gazing far down below on the bay where a brisk spring tide seemed to be trying to overtake some fishing boats drawn up on the sandbank to be out of its way. He counted seven of them. Half-a-crown a year was the sum which he, as lord of the manor, received for each boat, to which the privilege of escaping to this bank was accorded. Selswyke Bay, and the village of the same name lying in a ravine between two great cliffs, were hemmed in by a semicircle of high hills, which, with every variety of gently undulating line and lovely curve, sloped down to the sea-shore. Before the railway had been made anyone living at Selswyke might easily have persuaded himself that it was a little world intended to be sufficient to itself, and that no one ought ever to wish to leave it. Nothing could be seen of the greater world lying beyond the hills which closed it in on every side but one. It had its own seven or eight miles of sand, ending abruptly in almost insurmountable barriers of rocks fallen from the high cliffs which jutted out at each extremity of the semicircle. It had its own church and its manor house, its own meadow and corn-fields, its woods, its pastures, and sweet secluded ravines through which fresh brown streams from the hills forced their way downwards to the sea. It had, too, its own sky, and almost its own sea, for what sea could be perceived by the inhabitants of Selswyke was all but framed in by the high cliffs at each end of the little bay. Before the railway came the only visible sign of a great world beyond its own barriers was an occasional steamboat or sailing-vessel. Sometimes the knowledge that this other and wider

world had links that bound it closely to Selswyke was borne in on the inhabitants of that place by the harsh sounds of the speaking-trumpet from a vessel as it crossed in front of the bay, and then some mother, or wife, whose thoughts had for a long time been travelling by water, hearing this, would drop her work and cry, 'Oh, there's my poor dear Peter,' or John, and hurry away to a point where she would be clearly visible, to wave a large white sheet or table-cloth to show that Peter or John was not forgotten. Even the railway for some time did little to dispel the sense of isolation. A train suddenly made its way out of a high hill on the southward side, it rolled to the lower level of the station by its own impetus, it always stopped at Selswyke, but rarely deposited a passenger there. Sometimes, but not very often, it took one or two to the market at Scorton, but most of the Selswyke Bay folk were wholly unreconciled to the iron monster's approach, viewed it with alarm, and refused to entrust themselves to its power. It only stopped a minute or two, therefore, and then steamed away into a deep cutting in the cliff on the north side, was lost to view, and the connection with the outside world broken.

The squire now began to watch the hill to the southward for the puff of smoke which would show that the train had burrowed its way through the tunnel. Presently he heard steps crunching along the cinder-path, and saw the young artist Fairfax striding along to the station. What a good-looking, gentlemanlike lad he was! Why did he allow himself to send such telegrams to his sister, and how did he happen to have a sister who could permit herself to send such telegrams to him?

While Squire Rokewood was asking himself this, Mr. Fairfax came up, raised his cap, and said, 'I believe I am speaking to Mr. Rokewood; I wish to ask you a favour. Will you allow me to sketch in that little wood by the mill-beck, and may my sister sit beside me when I am at work? We shall have to go through the field, but we will keep to the footpath, and be careful not to trample the grass down. I see there is a board up with a notice that no one is to go there, but I shall be much obliged if you will allow us.'

'Oh, certainly,' said the squire, 'with pleasure.' He very much liked this young man's manner; he knew that squires always had gentleman-like manners, but was unaware that artists sometimes partook in that advantage. 'Are you staying at Selswyke?' he asked.

'Yes, I am at the Rokewood Arms; but I should be very glad to get to some quieter place—my sister is coming to be with me.'

'I am afraid there are no lodgings—at least none that would be comfortable. The New Inn is the best, but it is full.'

'We must be satisfied with the one we are in, then,' he remarked cheerily, 'and I dare say we shall do very well. I had no conception that anything so beautiful, and so absolutely unspoiled, as Selswyke, was still to be found in this ironclad country of ours. Oh, here's the train coming. Thank you for giving me leave. I hope I have not taken a liberty in asking.'

'Oh, dear, no, I am going to the station too,' said the squire, who began to think that it would look odd if he stayed where he was any longer.

'My sister and I are alone in the world—we have the misfortune, or perhaps I ought to say fortune, to have no relations.'

'My mother and I are in exactly the same plight, and we have sometimes the same difficulty in knowing whether it is an advantage or a disadvantage,' observed the squire, and never in his life had he spoken so freely to a stranger, and then he abruptly recalled himself to something more like his usual reserve of manner. 'See if there is a small parcel for me in this train,' he cried to the porter, to supply a motive for his appearance on the platform. He stayed by young Fairfax, though he was quite sure he should not like that sister. Seeing a girl in rather a fast-looking hat he felt certain that she was 'Agnes,' but turning to see if Fairfax was gazing at her with eyes of affection, he found that he had darted off to a third-class carriage, whence issued a pretty, a very pretty, young lady of three-and-twenty or so, looking very business-like, and eminently able to take care of herself. She was prettily dressed, but not by any means in the style of the three or four young ladies who represented county society at Selswyke. Her hair was light brown and curly, like her young brother's, and her brown eyes looked out of rather a pale face, full of spirit and character. She seemed lively enough to have sent that telegram, and a great deal more besides, and the squire was charmed. And he would have to watch her walk away with young Fairfax, and see no more of her. But would he? There was a difficulty about her luggage. The solitary porter was so busy trying to find what was not there for Squire Rokewood that he would think of nothing else.

'I must have the rest of my sister's luggage out,' said Fairfax to the station-master. Two trunks were already on the platform. 'How many more has she brought?' wondered the squire, 'and who is there here to see her pretty dresses?'

'Robin, it's all out but the book-box—I brought a box of books,' said Agnes.

'Jackson, attend to that lady,' cried the squire. 'Never mind my parcel ;' but Agnes did not hear, and what the porter regarded as the squire's magnanimity went for nothing.

PART II.

OTHER things engaged Squire Rokewood's attention for some days, and he had partly forgotten about Fairfax and his sister, when one day, happening to be fishing in the mill-beck, he came upon something that was decidedly abnormal in a wood which went by the name of Little Seroggs. It was a large white mushroom-like umbrella, and a man was sitting beneath it sketching, and by his side, on the bank, was a young lady in a blue print dress with some white about it, as the squire himself would have said if asked to describe it. 'Oh, the Fairfaxes !' he thought. 'That is where he asked leave to paint, of course.' So he reeled up his line, strode out of the bed of the stream, and looked for a place where he could get on dry land—a difficult thing to find just there, for the bank was cut short, and ended in a wall descending straight down into the water. Having succeeded in landing by retracing his steps a little, he went to the Fairfaxes, who as yet were unaware of his presence, taking care to approach in such a way as not to overlook the artist's drawing. 'Good morning,' he said ; 'I won't disturb you—don't move, Miss Fairfax.'

'My sister—Mr. Rokewood,' said Fairfax, perhaps intending to administer a gentle reproof.

Mr. Rokewood felt it so, and humbly hoped that they were tolerably comfortable at the inn ; and that it was not so noisy as Mr. Fairfax had feared.

Miss Fairfax shook her head. 'It really is noisy,' she said ; 'I suppose the sailors come.' How pretty, how delightfully pretty she was, but Mr. Rokewood thought her singularly indifferent to his presence. She was fastening lime leaves into each other to make a wreath, as he had seen German children do, and she went on doing it after the first words of greeting had been said.

He was silent for a minute or two, and then said, 'I am thinking of an arrangement that might perhaps be made, but I am not sure that it would suit you. I would tell you about it, only I am so afraid of disturbing you.' He was speaking to Fairfax, but his sister looked up, and said, ' You had better talk to me if there is anything to arrange ; he forgets to listen when his effect is on.'

'Cool people, these,' thought the squire, but he only said, 'Can you give me an idea what accommodation you want?'

'We want two bedrooms and two sitting-rooms if we can get them, but we have only one sitting-room at the inn, and could make one do in a new place.'

'Oh, then I think it might do very well,' said he, dropping down on the earth, which he never for a moment forgot was his own property, with the air of a man who needed no invitation to take a seat.

Miss Agnes, though he was not very near her, instinctively moved a little farther off.

'It is at my agent's house,' said the squire; 'I never allow him to let rooms, but I will gladly make an exception in your case.'

She thanked him—the sensation of being thanked by any one so pretty was very pleasant—and asked where the agent lived. 'You know the Manor House?' asked Mr. Rokewood. 'The agent lives in the white house not far from the lodge gate.'

'But I don't know the Manor House!' said Agnes. 'I always come here with Robin—I have done no prowling about yet.'

'Lucky Robin!' thought the squire, but he was rather angry with her for not knowing where the Manor House was, and why did she talk about prowling?—the Manor House was large enough to be seen, and found, without any prowling. 'Every one knows the Manor House,' he said, with an air of conviction. 'It stands on the hill behind the church; perhaps the trees hide it a little.'

'I wish I had seen it—I will, before I see you next,' she said with a little smile which did not escape the squire—was Miss Fairfax presuming to laugh at him?

'The thing to know is whether you think you would like me to tell the agent that he may let his rooms.'

'The arrangement sounds delightful—perfectly delightful—but don't say anything decided to the agent until we have seen them.'

It had never occurred to Mr. Rokewood that there was any chance of their not liking them.

'We will, with your permission, go and look at them this afternoon,' said Miss Fairfax. 'It is most kind of you to think of it.'

There was a certain air of concluding the interview about this, but the squire could not bring himself to go. Was Selswyke sometimes dull to him? Miss Fairfax's wreath was made and twisted round her hat, and now she was sitting by the edge of the bank looking down into the water, and watching a row of trout lying with their heads patiently turned up stream waiting for such food as might come.

'Throw that line in,' she exclaimed, 'I should so like to see you catch a fish.'

'Then come to the dub,' he said, wondering whether she would.

'Robin, I am going to some pool with Mr. Rokewood,' she exclaimed; 'he is going to let me see him catch a fish.'

'Many fish, most likely,' replied Robin carelessly, and she went.

They took a great fancy to the agent's house, and left the inn for it almost directly, and the next time they saw Mr. Rokewood, which, to tell the truth, was very soon, they expressed much gratitude. He, too, might have expressed gratitude, but was prudently silent. There was a shady walk at the back of his kitchen-garden which ran almost beneath the walls of the agent's house, and when Mr. Rokewood walked there, which now that he had become aware of its advantages he did every night, he could hear such music as had never before delighted his ears. The Fairfaxes, who evidently considered a piano a necessary of life, had hired an excellent one at Scorton, and now no night passed without Agnes playing for a couple of hours, and as the windows were always open Mr. Rokewood could hear to perfection. Every day added to his envy of that brother. Agnes was young, pretty, clever, affectionate, and above all musical, and that brother of hers profited by all these good gifts daily. The Fairfaxes were both extremely friendly with Mr. Rokewood now, but he observed that even if he happened to meet them near their own door, or walk home with them from young Fairfax's sketching-place, and go quite up to their door, they never by any chance gave him an invitation to go in, even though he often lay in wait for it. 'Perhaps they have taken it into their heads that my mother ought to call!' he thought, and recoiled at the immensity of the idea. Having once thought of this, he thought of it again, and presently it lost some of its awe, and at length, about six weeks after Miss Agnes' arrival, the day came when he said to the spare, angular lady, clad in rich silk, who was his mother, 'Don't you think it would be kind to call on the Fairfaxes, mother? They are quite gentlefolk—very well educated, and—'

'I have no intention of making their acquaintance, Geoffrey,' said Mrs. Rokewood frigidly.

'Have you any feeling against them, mother?'

'I have no feeling either for or against them. I simply do not want to do it,' Mrs. Rokewood answered with stony indifference.

'If I say I should very much like you to do it, mother, will you call?'

'If I could see any good reason for your wishing it, of course I would.'

'It would be kind.'

'So many things that one does not do would be kind,' said Mrs. Rokewood, and imagined that she had given him an answer.

'They are very nice people.'

'My not calling will not make them less nice.'

'Miss Fairfax is an admirable musician.'

'You go to the house?' she exclaimed, with a certain vehemence of surprise, for it was so unlike him 'to make himself common' in this way.

'No, I have not been to the house, but I have heard her play. I happened, when I was smoking one night, to stray out of one garden into another, and at last I went into the Elm Walk, and, mother, you have no conception how magnificently she plays! The windows were open, and I heard.'

'There you attack me in a weak part,' said Mrs. Rokewood—she was passionately fond of music.

'Call on her, then, and she will play for you.'

'I don't want to call on her,' answered Mrs. Rokewood decisively.

Her son said no more, but that night when he was in the Elm Walk he heard a low footfall, and presently a slight, frail figure, shrouded in black, stole through the darkness to his side. 'Don't be startled, Geoffrey,' she whispered; 'it's your mother come to hear this music. I don't think I should have dared to come if I had known what a long way it would seem in the dark.'

He gave her his arm and guided her faltering feet nearer to the house. There they stood listening for some time, during which every fibre of Mrs. Rokewood's being was thrilled with delight. That night she would have crept to the agent's house on her bended knees to call on Miss Agnes, but next day the ice had reunited and left no weak spot.

'Come into the garden with me,' said the squire the next evening after dinner. She said she would not, but went, and after her nature had once more been softened by what she heard, she said, 'Geoffrey, I will call on that girl, if you like, tomorrow.'

'Thank you,' said he, much pleased by this concession; 'you won't repent it. They are both charming; it's just one of those cases which show the folly of yielding to first impressions.'

'Yours was bad, then?'

'Not when I saw the people themselves. It was before I saw them that I didn't like them. I accidentally heard some tele-

grams they sent each other.' Then he told his mother what he had heard in Brown's shop.

'I am glad you have told me that,' said Mrs. Rokewood, who was sitting rigidly by her own fireside, 'for now I know that I shall not call. I should never like them!'

She was inflexible, and his state of mind about that, and vexation at his own folly, may be inferred. 'You may do what you like,' he at last exclaimed angrily—they were both people of strong temper and will—'you may call or not, exactly as you please, but to-morrow morning I shall go to Miss Fairfax and ask her to be my wife.'

The idea was so preposterous to Mrs. Rokewood that she was not disturbed by it. 'You scarcely know the girl,' she said calmly.

'I have spent at least an hour in her company every day for the last month or six weeks; sometimes two hours.'

Mrs. Rokewood shrugged her shoulders. 'In your heart, Geoffrey, you dislike vulgarity as much as I do!'

'How can you call Miss Fairfax vulgar when you have heard her music?'

'Ah, her music!' exclaimed Mrs. Rokewood, recalling those soul-stirring passages. But she froze again directly, for there was something in his manner that began to alarm her, and said,

'Don't let us think any more about her.'

Next day—it was a lovely August day quivering with light and radiance—Mr. Rokewood went to Little Scroggs, wishing as he went that for an hour or two Miss Fairfax would be a less good sister. Never now by any chance could he find an opportunity of seeing her alone. She liked him—he knew that, but he feared she would never like him enough to leave her brother for his sake. He found them as usual—no, not quite as usual, for Robin was sitting without his coat, and Agnes was mending a hole he had just torn in it. She laughed when Mr. Rokewood came and found her doing this; and said, 'Own that you think us a very odd couple.'

'I thought you a very odd couple before I made your acquaintance, but now I think you all that is most even, and most delightful.'

'But had you heard of us before you saw us?'

'I? no. At least in a way I had. How well your brother's picture—'

'Oh, no, you have said so much you must tell us all.'

'I accidentally heard the telegrams you sent each other.'

She laughed gaily: 'If you heard those, I don't know what

you must have thought of us. The truth is I have quite spoilt that boy Robin. I answer all his letters for him, and now he can't be got to write one, and that day I was in such difficulty, for he had told me the day before, when he came on to Selswyke Bay, that he would get lodgings for us here, and would write and tell me as soon as he did, and say what train I was to come by ; and he didn't write, and I didn't know that there was a mid-day post from Selswyke, and thought no letter was coming. I was obliged to turn out of the rooms I was in at Wragborough, and didn't know what to do !'

'Oh, the language was quite excusable,' said the squire.

"The language excusable." There's nothing to excuse. That's the family style when it sends telegrams. You can't say dear or darling in a telegram.'

'Then you were not angry with each other ?'

'We never were that in our lives. Here, Robin, take your coat—it's done. Now I have nothing to do.'

The squire tore a leaf out of his pocket-book, and wrote 'Come to the end of the first field with me ; I want to ask you to be my wife, and I can't speak before your brother.'

She turned pale, looked at him almost tearfully, and shook her head.

'Which of my requests are you denying ?' he asked, with an attempt at gaiety, while in his heart he felt alarm, and yet he could not quite believe that she would refuse him.

'Both,' she answered without looking up.

'Not really ?' he pleaded ; he was not a man who was used to plead.

'If you are going, I will walk part of the way across the field with you,' she said after a silence.

He rose—her manner did not lessen his uneasiness. He did not speak—his eyes were trying so hard to read hers.

'I have come so far,' she said, 'because, if you really mean this, I want to thank you, and to assure you that it is quite impossible !'

'Impossible for you to love me, do you mean ?' She blushed and turned away.

'Don't say that is impossible,' he pleaded.

'I could never give up my happy life with Robin ; he would be so miserable without me !'

'I might have known that you would never care for me,' said the squire bitterly.

'I never said I didn't care for you,' said Miss Fairfax, now for

the first time seeming to give utterance to her real mind, 'but I know that I never could bear to enter any family which looked down on me !'

'No family could do that—if you did but know what I think of you.'

'Mrs. Rokewood looks down on me ! Do you think I don't know ? It's not the first time that Robin and I have been sketching near a county family.'

'Ah, you mean that other county families have treated you better. Dear Miss Fairfax, why think of my mother ? Haven't I given you the greatest thing I have to offer ? I love you with all my heart.'

She wavered a moment, and he saw it.

'You know I love you,' he said tenderly. 'Think of me, not of my mother. If you accept me she will soon love you quite as much as she loves me ; and you do love me a little—something tells you that you ought to accept me.'

'Oh, but I should do so wrong to listen to it,' she said, offering him her hand in token of farewell.

'Don't go. Give me a little longer.'

'Accept this answer as final. I will stay with Robin.'

'I assure you my mother is much too fond of me to cross me long in anything on which my heart is set.'

'I am as proud as your mother. Not unless she herself came and asked me to listen to you, would I do it. I may be wrong, but that's how I feel.'

He tried to move her by every argument in his power, but she only became more rooted in her determination.

'Good-bye !' she said. 'We shall leave Selswyke in a day or two. We had better say good-bye now.'

'You surely don't want to tear your brother away before his work is done ?'

'I must,' she answered sadly ; and then with a half sob she said, 'I don't think I could stay here. I must go.'

'You must do nothing of the kind. I will go. I have long been wanting to go to America, and I will start to-morrow. Perhaps when I come back——'

'Never !' she exclaimed before he could finish his speech.

'At any rate I shall love you just the same,' said he, and wrung her hand and went.

'She is not playing to-night, then,' said Mrs. Rokewood, seeing her son in the drawing-room at the time when he usually was in the garden.

'No, she is not playing, and she refused me this morning because she knew that you would oppose our marriage; and tomorrow I am going to America.'

'You must please yourself, Geoffrey,' said Mrs. Rokewood. 'I can't stop your marrying Miss Fairfax, but I should never like it.'

He kept his word and went. Mrs. Rokewood sadly patrolled the spacious rooms and galleries of the Manor House. Each looked duller than the other, and she was dull too. Her son, her only son, was gone to the other side of the world and had said nothing about when he was likely to come back. 'One wants some young creature with one,' she said. 'The sight of young life is a good sight; but even an old person would be better than no one.' Later in the day she saw from her carriage window the Fairfaxes returning home. He was carrying a sketching bag and easel; she had his sketching stool. He was holding his sister's hand in his; and the old lady could not but think that she looked very sad, and that he was trying to comfort her. 'They seem very fond of each other,' she thought. 'There may be good stuff in that girl—her refusing Geoffrey almost looks as if there was.' She dined alone. 'So much state,' she thought, 'and such woeful solitude, and there is no one I want to ask here. If Geoffrey stays away six months or a year, it is a great piece out of my life! But it can't be helped. He did right to go.'

Dinner over, she left the desolate dining-room for the equally desolate drawing-room; but very soon—she never quite knew how it happened—she found herself hurrying along the Elm-tree Walk with a shawl over her head, to hear if that girl who had brought so much trouble upon her had recovered her spirits, and was at the piano again.

No music was to be heard that night. After this it became a nightly habit with Mrs. Rokewood to go into the garden to hear if the piano were opened, and at last she was enraptured by the Moonlight Sonata. She felt each note an added bliss, and sighed forth her contentment. Such playing was like the most exquisite poetry, or painting—never, never would she willingly miss the opportunity of enjoying so keen a pleasure. Alas, other things were keen besides the pleasure! September nights by the North Eastern Sea are cold, October nights are colder. Two gardens had to be crossed before she reached the Elm-tree Walk where her furtive joys were obtained. The thin shawl had to be exchanged for a thicker one, the thicker shawl for a fur cloak, and even that

was not enough to guard the poor lady from the heavy dews of late autumn nights, and the searching breezes from the sea. ‘I shall be ill,’ she thought one late October morning; ‘I feel as if I were going to be ill now; but before I am laid up I will do what I ought to have done before: I will go and see for myself what this girl, whom my only son has asked in marriage, is like. What am I that I should debar him from obtaining such a wife? Her soul reveals itself in her music!’

So that afternoon, when Agnes was sitting alone, and not less sad than her visitor, a tall, thin old lady, with a rather fierce, hawk-like nose, and eye, but a kind voice and manner, rustled into the agent’s best parlour and, holding out her hand, said, ‘Miss Fairfax, I wish to apologise to you for not coming to see you before; will you give me the opportunity of making your acquaintance now?’ Seeing that Agnes hesitated, she said, ‘My dear, it is not a small thing for a person of my age, and’—standing, she was going to say, but checked herself in time and said—‘infirmities, to come in this way to you, but I felt that I should like to do it. My son is away, and I am often lonely; will you come and see me sometimes?’

‘I will,’ said Agnes; ‘since you wish it, I will,’ and then they talked on more indifferent matters.

‘I wonder whether my invitation made her happier,’ thought Mrs. Rokewood at night, and closely wrapped in furs, she crept forth into the darkness to listen for ‘sallies of glad sound’ in her music. But the night was chill, and the windows shut, and the poor lady added so much cold to that which she had already, that the doctor spoke of her being a prisoner to the house all the winter. And still Agnes did not come.

‘I like her keeping away a little,’ thought Mrs. Rokewood. ‘She is behaving with proper dignity and spirit! And she showed much right feeling and dignity before,’ she mentally added, ‘when she refused Geoffrey because she knew how distasteful the marriage would be to me.’

More days passed and Agnes did not come. Mrs. Rokewood sat in her empty drawing-room, and tried to keep up a good fire, but the warmth of happiness was what she really wanted. She took her pen and wrote: ‘My dear, you said you would come—come now.’ And Agnes came.

Six weeks later Mrs. Rokewood wrote to her son: ‘Geoffrey, come home, to Agnes and to me.’

MARGARET HUNT.

Lady Car: the Sequel of a Life.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XIV.

LADY CAR had done too much, the doctor said. The last dinner had been given; the last guest had departed, and life at the Towers was about to begin under its new aspect—a changed aspect, and one which those of the spectators who were free from any personal feeling on the subject regarded with some curiosity. How was Tom to assume his new position as head of the house in presence of his mother and stepfather? Were they to remain there as his guests? Were they to leave along with the other visitors? Tom himself had fully made up his mind on this subject. He was indeed a little nervous about what Beau would say, and kept his eyes steadily away from that gentleman when he made his little announcement, which was done at breakfast on the first morning after the family party was left alone. It must be premised that Tom's birthday was in the end of July, and that by this time August had begun.

'I say, mother,' Tom said. He gave a glance round to make quite sure that the newspaper widely unfolded made a screen between himself and Beau. 'I mean to go in for the grouse this year on the Patullo moor.'

'I have always heard it was too small for such sport,' said Lady Car.

'Oh, I don't know that. You never would let me try. The keepers have had it all to themselves, and I dare say they've made a good thing out of it. But this year I'm going to make a change. I've asked a lot of fellows for the 12th.'

'You are losing no time, Tom. I am glad to find you are so hospitable,' said his mother.

'Oh, hospitable be hanged! I want to have some fun,' said the young master. 'And I say, mother'—he gave another glance

at the newspaper which was still opened out in front of his step-father. And Beau had made no remark. ‘Mother, I say, I don’t want, you know, to hurry you; but a lot of fellows together are sometimes a bit rowdy. I mean, you know, you mightn’t perhaps like— You’re so awfully quiet at Easton. I mean, you know—’

‘That you want us to leave the Towers, Tom.’

‘Oh, I don’t go so far as that. I only meant— Why, mother, don’t you know? It’s all different. It’s—not the same kind of thing—it’s—’

‘I understand,’ she said, in her quiet tones, and with her usual smile. ‘We had taken thought for that. Edward, we had spoken of going—when was it?’

‘To-morrow,’ said Beaufort, behind his paper. ‘That’s all settled. I had meant to tell you this morning, Tom. No need to have been in such a hurry; you know your mother is not fond of the Towers.’

‘I didn’t mean that there was any hurry,’ cried Tom, very red.

‘Perhaps not, my boy, but it looks like it. However, we’re both of one mind, which is convenient. The only thing that is wanted is a Bradshaw, for we had not settled yet about the trains.’

‘To-morrow’s awfully soon. I hope you won’t go to-morrow, mother. I never thought you’d move before a week at the soonest. I say! I’ll be left all alone here if you go to-morrow,’ Tom cried. But Beaufort took no notice of his remonstrance, and got his Bradshaw, and made out his plans as if it had been the most natural thing in the world. A few hours after, however, Lady Car, who had allowed that she was tired after the racket of the past week, was found to have fainted without giving any sign of such intentions. It was Janet who found her lying insensible on her sofa, and as the girl thought, dead. Janet flew downstairs for help, and meeting her brother, cried, ‘You have killed mother!’ as she darted past. And the alarm and horror of the household was great. Tom himself galloped off for the doctor at the most breakneck pace, and in great compunction and remorse. But the doctor was, on the whole, reassuring when he came. He pronounced the patient, who had by that time come to herself and was just as usual, though a trifle paler, to be overdone, which was very well explained by all that she had been going through, and the unusual strain upon her—and pronounced her unfit for so long a journey so soon. When, however, Beaufort informed him that

the Towers had never agreed with his wife—an intimation at which the doctor, who knew much better than Beaufort did what the Towers had been to poor Lady Car, nodded his head understandingly—he suggested breaking the journey. And this was how it happened that the family went to St. Andrews, where many things were to happen which no one had foreseen. Tom, still compunctious, and as tender as it was possible for him to be, and unable to persuade himself that he was not to blame for his mother's illness, as well as much overwhelmed by the prospect of being left entirely to his own company for nearly a fortnight, accompanied the party to that place. He thought he would take a look at the golf, and at least would find it easier to get rid of a few days there than alone in his own house. To do him justice he was a little anxious about his mother, too. To think that you have killed your mother, or even have been instrumental in killing her, is not a pleasant thought.

Lady Car got quickly well amid the sea breezes. They got her a house on the cliff, where from her sofa she could look out upon the sea, and all the lights and shades on the Forfar coast, and the shadows of the far distant ships like specks on the horizon, like hopes (she thought), always appearing afar, passing away, never near enough to be possible. She floated away from all acute pain as she lay recovering, and recovered, too, her beloved gift of verse, and made a very charming, but sad, little poem called 'Sails on the Horizon,' expressing this idea. Lady Car thought to herself, as she lay there, that her hopes had all been like that, far away, just within sight, passing without an approach, without a possibility of coming near. None of these ships ever changed their course or drew near St. Andrews Bay: yet the white distant sail would hang upon the horizon line as if it might turn its helm at any moment and come. And hope had come only so to Carry—never to stay, only in the distance. In the quiet of convalescence and of that profound immeasurable despair which took the form of perfect peace, that renunciation of all that she had wished for on earth, it was a pleasure for her to put that conceit into words. It was only a conceit, she was aware.

Presently she became able to go out, to be drawn in a chair along the sands, or away in the other direction to the line of the eastern coast, with all its curious rocks and coves. About ten days after her arrival in St. Andrews Lady Car made one of those expeditions accompanied by Beaufort and Janet. They took her in her little vehicle as far as it would go, and then she walked

a little down to the shore, to a spot which she recollect ed in her youth, where a grassy bank of the close short seaside grass bordered a ridge of broken rocks higher than the level of the beach. Over this line of rock there was a wonderful view of the little town isolated upon its headland, with the fine cluster of the ruined cathedral, the high square tower of St. Rule, the grey heap of the destroyed castle, and the little port below, set in the shining sea; and great breadths of the blue firmament banded with lines of pearly cloud. Here Carry sat down to rest while her companions went further along the coast to the curious little bay with its bristling rocks, where stands the famous Spindle, left among the seapools by some gigantic Norma of the north. The wide air, the great sky, the sense of space and freshness, and separation from all intrusive things; and, on the other hand, the picture made by that cluster of human habitations and ancient work of man defaced and worn, standing in the rays of the afternoon sun, which streamed over it from the west, made a perfect combination. The ridge of red rocks and piled stones which cut off all vulgarities of the foreground and relieved it in warm colour against the grey headland and the wonderful blue sea, shut in Lady Car's retreat, though the coast road wound on behind her, communicating by a rocky passage, almost like a stair, with the sands below. Lady Car seated herself upon the grass. She did not care even to sketch; all her old pursuits had dropped from her. She was content to sit still, with her eyes more often upon the wide line of the horizon than on any intermediate point, however attractive. There was a sort of luxury of the soul in that width of stainless silent air, which required nothing, not even thought, but filled her with a faint yet exquisite sense of calm. The peace of God—did she dare to call it so? Certainly it passed understanding. That she should sit in this beatitude in a calm so complete, with so many—oh, so many—things to make her anxious and to make her sad. Still, so it was.

She did not know how long she had sat there in that wide universe of sea and sky, when her attention was first called to voices underneath the ridge of rock. The sands beyond were on a lower level, and it might well be that people underneath might discuss the most private affairs without any thought of possible listeners above. Carry had heard the murmur of the voices for some time before she took any heed of them, or distinguished one from another. These tones she presently observed were very

unlike the peace all around : there was a sound of conflict in them, and now and then a broken note as if the woman sobbed. For it was apparent at once that the two were a man and woman, and soon that there was some controversy between them. When Lady Car began to awaken out of her dream of calm to become aware of these two people below and the discussion or quarrel which was every moment increasing in intensity, she did not perhaps know how to make her presence known, or rather, perhaps, it was something in the sound of one of the voices which bewildered and confused her. At first she thought with a vague trouble it was a voice she knew. Then she started from her grassy seat with a horrible sensation, as if she were hearing over again, though not addressed to herself, one of those mocking, threatening, insulting floods of words which had once been the terror of her life. Torrance ! Had she lived to hear him speak again ? She had escaped from all imagination of him in this beautiful and distant scene. What was it that like a terrible wind of recollection, like an hour come back from the miserable past, made her hear his voice again ?

She had risen up in her dismay and alarm, almost with an impulse of flight, to get out of his way, lest he should find her again, when an impression almost more terrible still made her pause and hold her throbbing breast with both her hands. She turned her face towards the rock with a faint cry, and sank down again upon the grass. There could be no doubt that it was a man speaking to a woman over whom he had almost absolute power, a husband to a wife—or perhaps—but Carry knew no other relationship than that which permitted such tones, and when her first irrational panic was over, she became aware that it was the voice of Tom.

To whom was he speaking ? She did not ask what he was saying. She could not hear the words, but she knew them. A woman who has once borne such a storm recognises it again. To whom could Tom speak in that voice of the supreme ?—mocking, threatening, pouring forth abuse and wrath. To whom did the boy dare to speak so ? He had no wife.

The voices grow louder ; the two seem to be parting ; the man hurrying away, discharging a volley at his companion as he left her, the woman weeping, following, calling him back. Lady Car sat breathless, her terrified eyes fixed on the path behind, up which she heard him coming. ‘ Go back, I tell you ; I have nothing more to say to you,’ he cried,

His countenance, flushed with rage, appearing above the edge of the rocks, while he half-turned back, waving the other away—brought confirmation certain of Lady Car's fears. She rose again and made a step towards him, tottering in every limb, as in other days, when his father had beaten her to the ground with such another torrent. But to whom, to whom was the boy speaking? She cried out in a voice of anguish 'Tom!'

He started in his turn so violently that he stumbled on the rocks and almost fell. 'Mother!' he cried instinctively. Then turned round with a hoarse roar of 'Back! back!' cursing himself for that betrayal.

'Tom, what is it? to whom were you speaking?—answer me! To whom did you dare to speak like that?'

'What are you doing here?' he said. 'Listening! I never knew you do that before, mother—come along! this isn't a place for you.'

'To whom were you speaking, Tom?'

'Me! I was speaking to nobody; there's some sweethearts or something carrying on down there. I don't meddle with what is none of my concerns. Come along! I am not going to leave you here.'

He seized her arm to draw her away, and Lady Car saw that his rage had turned to tremor. He looked at her from under his lowering eyebrows with that fierce panic which is sometimes in the eyes of a terrified dog ready to fly at and rend anyone in wild truculence of fear.

'I am not going from here till my husband comes for me—nor till I know what this means,' said Lady Car. She was trembling all over, and her heart so beating that every wild throb shook her frame. But she was not afraid of her son's violence. And other steps were drawing near. As Lady Car leaned upon a corner of the rock supporting herself, there gradually appeared up the ascent a young woman in very fine, but flimsy attire, her face flushed with crying and quarrelling, dabbing her cheeks with a handkerchief like a ball all gathered up in her hand. The impression of bright colour and holiday dress so inconsistent with the violent scene through which she had been passing, and the probable tragical circumstances in which the unhappy girl stood, threw a sort of grotesque misery into the midst of the horror.

'Oh!' cried the new comer, 'he called you his mother, he did! If you are his mother, it's you most as I ought to see.'

'Hold your cursed tongue,' cried Tom, beside himself, 'and get off with you! I've told you so before. You're not fit to speak to my—to a lady. Go! go.'

'You think it grand to say that,' cried the girl, evidently emboldened by the presence of a third party, 'but you may just give it up. I'm not ashamed to speak to any lady. I've done nothing to be ashamed of. I've got my marriage lines to show, and my wedding ring on my finger. Look at that, ma'am,' she cried, dragging a glove off a red and swollen hand. It was with tears, and trouble, and excitement that she was so swollen and red. She thrust her hand with indeed a wedding ring upon it in Lady Car's face. 'Look at that, ma'am; there can't be no mistake about that.'

'I must sit down; I cannot stand,' said Carry. 'Come here, if you please, and tell me who you are.'

'She's not fit to come where you are. I told you to go,' said Tom. 'Go, and I'll send somebody to settle—you've no business here.'

'If she's your mother, Frank, I won't deceive nobody. I'm Mrs. Francis Lindores, and I've got my marriage lines to show for it. I'm not ashamed to look anybody in the face. I've got my marriage li—'

'Mrs.—what?' said Lady Car.

'Mrs. Francis Lindores. I never thought but what he meant honourable, and my own mother was at the wedding and everything right. He wants to say now that it's no marriage; but it is—it is. It's in the register all right where we signed in the vestry. Oh Frank, I know you're only talking to frighten me, but your mother will make it all right.'

Lady Car and her son exchanged but one glance—on her part, a look of anguished inquiry searching his face for confirmation of this tremendous statement—on his, the look of a fierce but whipped hound, ready to tear anyone asunder that came near him, yet abject in conscious guilt. The mother put her hand to her breast as if to hide where the bullet had gone in. She said in a voice interrupted by her quickened breathing :

'Excuse me a little, I am not very well: but tell me everything—tell me the truth. Did you say that you were—married to this young gentleman?'

'She'll say anything,' cried Tom hoarsely. 'She'll swear anything. She's not fit to come near you. Go away, I tell you, curse you—you shall have everything you want if you go away.'

'Be silent, Tom; at present she has me, not you, to answer. Tell me—'

'You call him Tom,' said the young woman with surprise; 'it's perhaps a pet name—for his real name is Frank Lindores: and that's on my cards that I got printed—and that's who I am: and I can bring witnesses. My marriage lines, I've got 'em in the hotel where I'm staying. If you're his mother, I'm his wife, and he can't deny it. Oh, Frank! the lady looks kind. Don't deny it, don't deny it! She'll forgive you. Don't deny the truth.'

'The truth,' cried Tom, forgetting himself in his heat. 'You can see how much truth is in it by the name she tells you—and I wasn't of age till last week,' cried the precocious ruffian, with a laugh which again was like the fierce bark of the whipped hound.

All Lady Car's senses had come back to her in the shock of this horror. 'You married her—in the name of Francis Lindores—thinking *that*, and that you were under age would make it void. If you've anything to say that I should not believe this, say it quick, Tom—lest I should die first and think my boy a—'

She leant back her pale head against the rocks, and one of those spasms passed over her which had already scared the household at the Towers: but the superior poignancy of the mental anguish kept Lady Car from complete unconsciousness. She heard their voices vaguely contending through the half-trance: then slowly the light came back to her eyes. The young woman was kneeling beside her with a vinaigrette in her hot hand. 'Oh, smell at this, do! it's the best thing in the world for a faint. Oh, poor lady! I wish I had never said a word rather than make her so bad!'

Lady Car opened her eyes to see the stranger kneeling with an anxious face by her side, while Tom stood, lowering, looking on. It crossed her mind that perhaps the boy would have been glad had she died, and this disclosure been buried with her. The stab of this thought was so keen that she came completely to herself, restored by that sharp remedy of superior pain.

'I do not think she is bad,' she said faintly. 'I think she has an honest face. Tom, is that true?'

'It's all a piece of nonsense, mother, as I told you. It was just to please her. She was not too particular—to have the show of a wedding, that was all. She knew very well—'

The girl struggled to her feet. She seized him by the arm and shook him in her passion.

'I'll tear your eyes out,' she cried, 'if you speak like that of

me! Oh, lady! we're married as safe as any clergyman could marry two people.'

'You fool!' cried Tom, 'there's no such person as Frank Lindores. And I wasn't of age.'

The young woman looked at him for a moment confounded. The colour left her excited face; she stood staring as if unable to comprehend; then, as her senses came back to her, burst into a loud fit of sobbing and crying, throwing herself down on the grass. 'Oh, oh, oh!' she cried, sobbing and rocking herself. 'Oh, whatever shall I do? Oh, what will become of mother?' Then rising suddenly to her knees she caught Lady Car's dress. 'Oh, lady, lady! you've got a kind face; do something for me; make him do me justice; make him, make him—oh, my God, listen to him!' cried the girl, for Tom, in the horrible triumph he thought he had gained, was pealing forth a harsh laugh—a sort of tempest tone of exultation over the two helpless women at his feet.

Beaufort, with Janet at a little distance behind him, came suddenly upon this strange scene. He thought at first that his wife was ill, and hurried forward anxiously, asking, 'What is the matter?' He saw Carry pale as death, her mouth drawn, her eyes dilated, leaning back against the rocks, holding the hand of a girl unknown who knelt beside her, while Tom, who had laughed, stood over the pair with still that mirthless grimace distending his lips.

'Edward,' Lady Car said, 'I have something to ask you; something at once before you ask me a question. A marriage under a false name—is that no marriage? Tell me—tell me quick, quick!'

'What a strange question!' he said. 'But I know nothing about marriages in Scotland. You know people say—'

'It was not in Scotland. Quick, quick!'

'A marriage—when a false name is given?—meaning to deceive?'

She said 'Yes' with her lips without any sound, a faint flame as of shame passing over the whiteness of her face. Tom thrust his hands into his pockets and screwed his mouth as if he would have whistled, but no sound came. The girl faced round, always upon her knees, a strange intruder into that strange group, and stared at Beaufort as if he had been a god.

'I don't understand why you should ask me such a question. The marriage is good enough. The law doesn't permit—'

'Not if the man is under age?'

'He can be imprisoned for perjury if he has sworn he is of age—as some fools do; but what in the world can you want with such information as that?'

'Edward,' said Lady Car with some difficulty, her throat and lips being so dry, 'this is Tom's wife.'

CHAPTER XV.

SHE never knew how she was taken home. A horrible dream of half-conscious misery, of dreadful movement when all she wanted was to lie down and be still, of a confusion of sights and sounds, things dimly seen in strange unnatural motion, voices all broken into one bewildering hum, always that sense of being taken somewhere where she did not want to go, when quiet and silence was all she desired, interposed between the rocky plateau of the shore, and her room, in which she opened her eyes in the evening in the waning light to find Janet and her maid by her bedside, her windows wide open to admit the air, and Beaufort in consultation with the doctor at the other end of the room. She had opened her eyes for a minute or two before everything settled into its place, and she perceived fully where she was. She lay in great weakness, but no pain, remembering nothing, feeling the soft all-enveloping peace which had been round her like a mantle, covering all her wounds again. 'Are you there, my Den: and is that Edward?' she said. And it was not till some time after, till the soft shaded lights were lit in the room and all quiet, and Beaufort seated by her bedside reading to her, that she suddenly remembered what had passed. She put out her thin hand and grasped him by the arm. 'Edward, was that true?'

'What, Carry? Nothing has happened but that you have been ill a little, and now you are better, my love, and you must be quiet, very quiet.'

'It *is* true,' she said, with her fingers clasping his arm. 'My son did that; *my* son.'

'It is put all right,' said Beaufort; 'there is no deadly wrong done. And the girl is very young; she can be trained. Carry, my love!'

'Yes, I know. I must keep quiet, and I will. I can put everything out of my thoughts now. God has given me the power. But he meant *that*, Edward.'

'God knows what he meant,' said Beaufort. 'He did not realise. Half the harm these boys do is that they never realise—'

'You say women are often unjust. Would men—look over that?'

He got up from his chair and put down his book. 'You must not question me,' he said, 'you must not think of it at all. Put it out of your thoughts altogether, my dear love. You must think of the rest of us—of me, and poor little Janet.' He added, after a moment, 'no one need ever know.'

Certainly Beaufort was very kind. He behaved in all this like a true gentleman and true lover. He would have plucked out altogether the sting of that great wound had it been possible, and he was quite unaware of the other stings he had himself planted undermining her strength. She looked up at him, lying there in her weakness, with her beautiful smile coming back, the smile which was so soft, so indulgent, so tender, so all-forgiving, the smile that meant despair. What could she do more, that gentle, shipwrecked creature, unable to contend with the wild seas and billows that went over her head? What had she ever been able to do?

Janet, who did not know what was the meaning of it all, but had vague horrible fancies about Tom which she could not clear up, went out next day by herself in the bright August morning to get a little air. She had enough of her mother in her to like the sound of the sea, and to be soothed by it. And the half-comprehended incidents of the previous night and the alarm about Lady Car's state had shaken Janet. She thought, with the simplicity of her age, that perhaps if she went away a little, was absent for an hour or so from the room, that her mother would not look so pale when she came back, and Lady Car's smile went to Janet's heart. It was too like an angel's, she thought to herself. A living woman ought not to be too like an angel. Her eyes kept filling with tears as she wandered along looking out upon the sea. But gradually the bright air and the light that was in the atmosphere and the warmth of the sunshine stole into Janet's heart and dried the tears in her eyes. She went into the green enclosure of the ruined castle and sat down upon the old wall looking out to sea. She could see the place where she and Beau had come upon that strange group among the rocks. She had not made out yet what it meant.

As she sat there gazing out and lost in her own thoughts and wonderings, a voice suddenly sounded at her ear which made her

start—‘Oh, my bonnie Miss Janet,’ it said, ‘have I found you at last?’ Janet turned slowly round aghast. The colour forsook her face, and all strength seemed to die out of her. She had known it would come one time or other. She had steeled herself for such a meeting every time she had been compelled to leave the shelter of the Towers; but now that she was far away, in a place which had no association with him, surely—surely she should have been safe now. And yet she had known beforehand, always known that some time this would come. His voice sank into her soul, taking away all her strength and courage. What hold Janet supposed this man to have over her who could tell? She feared him as if he had it in his power to carry her away against her will or do some dreadful harm. The imagination of a girl has wild and causeless panics as well as gracious visions. She trembled before this man with a terror which she did not attempt to account for. She turned round slowly a panic-stricken, colourless face.

‘Why, what is the matter with you, my bonnie little lady? Are ye feared for me?’

‘Oh, Mr. Charlie,’ said Janet, ‘don’t speak to me here. If anybody were to see you! And mother—mother is in great trouble already. Oh, don’t speak to me here!’

‘Do you mean you will speak to me some other place? I’m well content if ye’ll do that—some place where we will be more private, by ourselves. Ye may be sure that’s what I would like best.’

‘I did not mean that,’ said Janet, in great distress. ‘Oh, Mr. Charlie, don’t speak to me at all! I am very unhappy—already.’

‘It will not make you more unhappy to speak to an old friend like me. And who has made you unhappy, my bonnie lady? I wish I had the paying of him. It’ll be that loon of a brother of yours.’

‘How dare you speak so of my brother?’ cried Janet with momentary energy, and then she began to cry, unable to restrain herself in her agitation. ‘Oh, go away! If you please, will you go away?’

‘And do you want to hear no more of the pony?’ said Charlie Blackmore. ‘She’s as bonny a little beast as ever stepped, and fit to carry a princess—or Miss Janet Torrance. I’ve kept my word. She’s just been bred like a princess, without doing a day’s work. I’ve kept her, as I said I would, for you.’

‘Oh, I hope you do not mean that,’ cried Janet. ‘Oh, Mr.

Charlie, I hope it was not my fault! I was very very young then, and I did not know there was any harm in it. Oh, I hope you have not kept her for me!

'What harm was there in it?' he said, putting his hand on her arm, which Janet drew away as if his touch had been fire. 'Come now, Miss Janet, you must be reasonable. There was no harm in it more than there is in a little crack by ourselves, between you and me.'

Janet shrank into the corner of the seat away from him. 'There was harm,' she said, 'for I never told mother; and there is harm now, for if anyone I knew were to come here and see us I would die of shame.'

'No, my bonnie lady, you would not die; that's too strong,' said Blackmore. 'And do you know it's not civil to draw away like that. When we met in the East road you were not so frightened. You gave me many a glint of your eyes then, and many a pleasant word. And do you mind the long rides we had, and you as sorry when they were over as me? And the miles that I rode to bring you the pony and give you pleasure, though you turn from me now?'

'You were very kind, Mr. Charlie,' said Janet in a trembling voice.

'I am not saying I was kind. I would not have done it if I had not liked it. But you were kind then, Miss Janet, and you're not kind now.'

'I was only a child,' Janet cried; 'I never thought. I know now it was very silly—oh, more than silly. If I beg your pardon, oh, Mr. Charlie, will you forgive me, and—and leave me alone?'

'And what if that was to break my heart?' he said.

'Break your heart! Why should it do that? Oh, no, no, it would not do that; you are only laughing—'

'Me laughing! What if I had taken a fancy, then, for a bit small girl, and set my heart upon her, but kept out of the way for years not to see the bonnie little thing, till now that you're woman grown and understand? And all you say is to ask me to leave you alone! Is that a kind thing to say?'

'Mr. Charlie,' said Janet desperately, 'I can hear by your voice that you're not in earnest; and as for taking a fancy, I was only a child, and that could mean nothing. And the whole of it was just—just sport to you, and it is for a joke you're doing it now.'

'Joke! it's no joke,' he said. 'I know what you think; you

think I'm not gentleman enough for you. But I'll have plenty of money, and your father, if he had lived, would not have turned me from his door. Hallo! who's there?' he cried, starting up as some one hit him sharply on the shoulder. Janet, looking up in fresh alarm, felt a mingled rush of terror and relief when she saw over Blackmore's head the lowering countenance of Tom.

'I say, Charlie, get out of that,' said Tom. 'I'm not going to stand this sort of thing, you know. I may be going to the dogs myself, but my sister shan't. Be off, I tell you, and leave her alone.'

'Am I the dogs, Mr. Tom? No such black dogs as you're going to, my friend. Keep your good advice for yourself, and don't intrude where you're not wanted. We can manage our affairs without you.'

'By Jove!' cried Tom, 'if you speak another word to my sister, I'll pitch you over the cliff!'

Blackmore began to laugh with an exasperating contempt—contempt which exasperated Janet, though Tom too had touched the same note of the intolerable. She sprang up hastily, putting out her arm between them. 'You are two men,' she said, 'but Tom is not much more than a boy, and you are quarrelling about me that wants nothing in the world so much as to get away from both of you. Do you hear me? I would not vex mother,' Janet cried, 'for all the men in the world. Oh, can't you see that you are like two fools wrangling over me?'

'Let him take himself off, then,' said Tom.

'And let him hold his tongue, the confounded young scamp!' cried the other, 'that dares to challenge me—when he knows I could lick him within an inch of his life.'

Tom was half mad with disappointment and humiliation. He was very proud in his way, with the mingled pride of the peasant and the *nouveau riche*, the millionaire and the (Scotch) clown. He had meant, after he had 'had his fun,' to have settled down when his time came, and to have married a lady like his mother. Without imagination, or sense, or principle, or restraint of honour, he had pursued his reckless career, too precipitate and eager in pursuit of pleasure to leave time to think, even if he had been able to think. The abominable treachery of which he had intended to be guilty had not touched his conscience, not having appeared to his obtuse understanding as anything worse than many 'dodges' which other fellows adopted to get what they wanted. And it was with a rage and humiliation unspeakable

that he found himself—he, the son of the man who had married Lady Caroline Lindores, married in his turn to a girl from a little Oxford shop—a little shopgirl, a common little flirt, less than nobody, not so good by ever so many grades as his mother's maid. To find that he had married her when he meant only to deceive her, and made her mistress of the Towers, which was as Windsor Castle to Tom, and put her in the place of Lady Car, was gall and bitterness to him. His conscience had given him little trouble, but his wounded pride, his mortification, his humiliation were torture to him. He had come out raging with these furious pangs, eager to find something, anything, with which he could fight and assuage his burning wrath. To pitch Charlie Blackmore over the cliffs, even to be pitched over them himself, and roll down the sharp rocks and plunge in the cold sea beneath, felt as though it would be a relief from the gnawing and the rage within.

'Come on, then !' he cried, furious ; 'I'll take no licking from any man if he were Goliath. Come on !'

'Mr. Charlie,' cried Janet, putting out her hands, 'if it's true, you may do one thing for me. One thing I ask you to do as if you were the best gentleman in the world, and I will think you so if you will do it : leave me to him and him to me. And good-bye; and neither say you like us nor hate us, but just go—oh go ! Do you hear me ?' she said, stamping her foot. 'I ask you as a gentleman.' She had caught her brother by the arm and held him while she waved the other away.

'That's a strong argument,' said Blackmore. He was moved by what she said, and also by common sense which told him his suit was folly. 'If we're fools, you're none Miss Janet Torrance,' he said with a laugh, 'which is more than I thought. What ! am I to turn my back upon a man that's clenching his neives at me ? Well, maybe you're right ! There's none in the county will think Charlie Blackmore stands in fear of Tom Torrance. Yes, Missie, you shall have your will. I'm going—good-bye to both him and you.'

'Do you think I'll let the fellow go like that ?' cried Tom, making a step after him ; but perhaps his fury fell at the sight of the might and strength of the retiring champion—perhaps it was only the wretchedness in his mind that fell from the burning to the freezing point. He sat down gloomily, after having watched him disappear, on the bench from which Charlie Blackmore had risen.

'I don't care what becomes of me, Jen,' he said. 'I'm done. Nothing that ever happens will be any good to me now. I've choked that fellow off, that's one thing, and he'll never dare speak to you again. But as for me, I'm done, and I'll never lift my head any more.'

'Oh, Tom!' Janet cried. She was too much excited by her own affairs to turn in a moment with this new evolution to his—but that panting cry bore any meaning according to the hearer's apprehension, and he was too deep in his own thoughts to need more.

'Yes,' said Tom, 'it's all over with me. Just come of age and lots of money to spend, and all the world before me, as you might say—but I'll never have the heart to make any stand again. To think that all I've got, and might have done so much with, is to go to a woman that never had sixpence in her life and knows no more than a dog how to behave herself! As for hurting her, it wouldn't have hurt her, not a bit—and if she'd had the chance she would have done just as bad by me. Law,' cried Tom, with bitter contempt, 'what's the good of law when it can't protect a fellow before he's come to his full senses! To think I should have tied such a burden on my back, and done for myself for ever before I came of age. It's horrible,' he cried with the earnestness of conviction, 'it's damnable—that's what it is.'

'Oh, Tom, perhaps it will not be so bad,' said Janet, putting her hand within his to show her sympathy. She was very uncertain as to what it was that caused this despair, and she had been vaguely impressed with the fact that this time what Tom had done was something terrible; but neither her own trouble nor any doubt about his conduct (which was so seldom blameless) could quench the sympathy with which she responded to his appeal.

'Oh, yes, it will be quite as bad and worse—and I'm a ruined man,' cried Tom. 'Done for! although it was only last week,' he said with a piteous quiver of the lip which a half-grown moustache nearly shaded, 'that I came of age.'

Janet felt the pathos of this appeal go to the bottom of her heart. She did not know what to say to comfort him, and she could not keep her own eyes from straying after Charlie, who after all had been very kind, who had gone away at her prayer like the most complete of gentlemen. She was very thankful to be released, yet her eyes followed him with something like pride in his docility, and in the vigour and strength and magnanimity of

her first lover. Though she was much afraid of him, Janet forgave him kindly as soon as he was gone. The tears came into her eyes for Tom's distress, while yet, with a thought for the other, she watched him with a corner of her eye over Tom's bowed head. He turned round and took off his hat to her before he disappeared under the low arch, and Janet, in politeness and regret, made the faintest little bow and gave him a last glance. This made her pause before she answered Tom.

'It's all Beau's fault,' said Tom, as if he had been talking of stolen apples. 'She would never have been any wiser, nor mother either, if it hadn't been for Beau with his confounded law. And I don't believe it now,' he said; 'I won't believe it. Think, Jen—to be married and done for, and no way of getting out of it, before you're twenty-one!'

'But wasn't it—your own doing, Tom?'

Then Tom got up and gave vent to a great moral aphorism. 'There is nothing in this world your own doing,' he said; 'you're put up to it, or you're led into it, and one tells you one thing and another another. But when you've been and done it after what's been told you, and every one has had a hand in it to lead you on, then they all turn round upon you, and you have to bear it by yourself. And everybody says it's your own doing. And neither the law nor your friends will help you. And you're just ruined and done for—before you ever had begun at all.'

'Oh, Tom,' cried Janet, 'come home—and perhaps it will not turn out so bad after all.'

'It can't turn out anything but bad—and I'll just go and drown myself and be done with it all.'

'Oh, Tom, Tom!'

He got up from her with his hands deep in his pockets and his gloomy head bent. 'Leave alone,' he said, pushing her away with his shoulder as in the old nursery days. 'When's dinner? But I'll dine at the club, you can tell Beau, if they'll have me there.'

CHAPTER XVI.

THERE could be no doubt that Beaufort behaved throughout this business in the most admirable way. He made the very best of it to Lady Car, who lay and listened to his voice as to the playing of a pleasant tune, sometimes closing her eyes to hear the better.

She had got her death wound. Tom had never been the son she had dreamed. He was his father's son, not hers, and to see him succumb to the grosser temptations had been misery and torture to her. But the story of that fraud, so fully intended, made with such clear purpose, was one of those overwhelming revelations which go to the very heart. If a woman is unhappy in her married life, if she is tricked and cheated by fate in every other way, there is still always the natural justice to fall back upon, that the children will be left to her—her children in whom to live a new life; to see heaven unfolding again; to have some faint reflection of herself, some flower of her planting, some trace that she has been. And when she has to confess to herself that the child of her affections, the thing that has come from her, the climax of her own being, is in fact all unworthy, a creature of the dunghill, not only base, but incapable of comprehending what is good and true, that final disenchantment is too great for flesh and blood. Nature, merciful, sometimes blinds the woman's eyes, makes her incapable of judging, fills her with fond folly that sees no imperfection in her own—and that folly is blessed. But there are some who are not blinded by love, but made more keen and quick of sight. She lay silent and listened while Beaufort performed that melody in her ears, feeling a poignant sweetness in it, since at least it was the most beautiful thing for him to do, yet with every word feeling more and more the anguish of the failure, and the depth of the death wound which was in her heart.

'There are boys who torture cats and dogs and tear flies asunder, and yet are not evil creatures,' Beaufort said; 'they have not the power of realising the pain they cause. They want imagination. They know nothing of the animals they hurt, except that they are there in their power to be done what they please with. My love, Tom is like that: it is part of the dreadful cynicism that young men seem to originate somehow among themselves. They think they are the subjects of every kind of interested wile, and that such a thing as—this'—Beaufort was not philosopher enough to name Tom's act more distinctly—'is nothing more than a sort of balance on their side.'

Lady Car opened her eyes, which were clear with fever and weakness, lucid like an evening sky, and looked at her husband with a piteous smile.

'My dearest,' he said hastily, 'I am saying only how they represent such things to themselves. They don't take time to

think—they rush on to the wildest conclusions. The thing is done before they see or realise what it is. And then, as I tell you, they think themselves the prey, and those—those others the hunters—and take their revenge—when they can.'

But it was hard to go on with that argument with her eyes upon him. When she closed them he could speak. When they opened again in the midst of his plea, those eyes so clear with fever, so liquid, as if every film had been swept from them, and only an all-seeing, unquenchable vision, yet tender as the heavens, left behind—he stopped and faltered in his tale: and then he took refuge in that last resort of human feeling—the thing that had to be done, the expedients by which a wrong can be made to appear as if it were right, and trouble and misery smoothed away, so that the world should believe that all was well.

The conclusion, which was not arrived at for some time, was that which old Lord Lindores took credit to himself for having suggested before, ‘and which might have put a stop to all this,’ he said with a wave of his hand. It was Africa and big game for two or three years, during which ‘the young woman’—the family spoke of her as if she had no name—should be put under careful training. It had been ascertained, still by Beaufort, who conducted himself to everybody’s admiration, that ‘the young woman’ had no bad antecedents, and that so much hope as there could be in such a miserable business might be theirs. Tom was so thoroughly broken down by the discovery which humbled his clownish pride to the dust, and made him feel almost as poor a creature as he was, that he gave in with little resistance to the dictates of the family council. No unhappy university man, however, was beguiled into accompanying this unlikely pupil. He was given into the hands of a mighty sportsman, who treated him like a powder boy, and brought Tom, the Lord of the Towers, the wealthiest commoner in the North, the experienced man of Oxford, into complete and abject subjection—which was the best thing that could have happened to him.

The ‘young woman’ was less easily subdued. She wrote to her relations that it had been all a mistake, but that family reasons had made it impossible for her husband and herself to disclose the true state of affairs before. That, instead of being Mrs. Francis Lindores, she was Mrs. Thomas Francis Lindores Torrance, of the Towers, her dear husband being the son of Thomas Torrance, Esq., of the Towers, and of Lady Caroline Lindores, the daughter of the Earl of Lindores, from whom dear Tom took his

second name, as they might see in any peerage ; that her mother-in-law and all her new family were very nice to her, and that she was going off upon a visit with Lady Edith Erskine, who was her aunt, and dear grandmama the Countess. And she ordered for herself at once new cards with Mrs. F. T. Lindores Torrance upon them, which she thought looked far more distinguished-looking than the original name. But when Mrs. Tom became aware that dear grandmama and her dear aunt meant to conduct her to an educational establishment, where she was to pass at least the two next years of her life, the young woman rebelled at once. She had never heard, she declared, of a married woman going to school ; that her place was with her husband ; that she had passed all the standards, and learnt to play the piano, and had taken lessons in French ; that no woman, unless she were going to be a governess, wanted more ; and, finally, that she flatly refused to go. It was more difficult, much more difficult, than with Tom to convince his wife : for she was still more ignorant than Tom, and thought his giving in ridiculous, and did not see why, with him or without him, she should not go and take up her abode at the Towers, ‘and look after things,’ which she felt must be in great want of someone to look after them. She was made to yield at last, but not without difficulty, declaring to the last moment that she could not be refused alimony, and that she would take her alimony and go and live independent at home till her husband came to claim her, rather than go to school at her age. But Beaufort managed this too, to the admiration of everybody. He brought to bear upon the young woman pressure from her ‘ome, where her mother, under his skilful manipulation, was brought to see the necessity of going to school, and declined to receive her rebellious daughter. This was at the cost of another allowance from Tom’s estate, for it was not fit that Tom’s mother-in-law should continue to earn her bread poorly, without her daughter’s assistance, in a poor little confectioner’s shop. Beaufort managed all this without even betraying the name of this poor old woman, or where she lived, to the researches of the Lindores, for Lady Car was very tender of her boy’s name even now.

And she was taken home—to Easton, which she loved : and said she was much better, and was able to be out on her husband’s arm, and sit on the lawn and watch the sun setting and the stars coming out over the trees. But she had got her death wound. She lay on the sofa for months, for one lingering winter after another, smiling upon all that was done for her, very anxious that Janet should

go everywhere and enjoy everything, and that Beaufort should be pleased and happy. She asked nothing for herself, but gave them her whole heart of love and interest to everything that was done by them. She had her sofa placed where she could see them when they went out, and smiled when Beaufort said, always with a slight hesitation, for he thought it was not right to leave her, that he was going to ride over to the Club, or to spend a day in town. ‘Do; and bring us back all the news,’ she said. And when Janet went away with compunctions to go to balls with her grandmother, Lady Car was the one who explained away all objections. ‘Quite pleased to have you go—to have Beau to myself for a little,’ Lady Car said sometimes, a little vexing her child; but, when Janet was gone, urging Beaufort to the pleasure he longed for but did not like to take. ‘It is just what I wanted that you should go to town: and you can bring me back news of my little Den.’ Sometimes they were even a little piqued that she wanted them so little—poor Lady Car!

And thus quite gently she faded away, loved—as other people love, not as she loved: cherished and revered, but not as she would have revered and cherished; with a husband who read the papers and went to his Club, and got very gracefully through life, in which he was of no importance to anyone, and her only son banished in Africa, shooting big game. Janet was a good child, very good: but her mother never knew how near the girl was to her in the shadowy land where people may wander side by side, but without the intervention of words or some self-betrayal never find each other out. Perhaps had Janet found the courage to fling herself down at her mother’s side, and say all that was in her heart, the grasp of that warm hand might still have brought Lady Car back to life. But Janet had not the courage, and everything went on in its daily calm, and the woman whose every hope had faded into blank disappointment, and all her efforts ended in failure, faded away. During the first summer Lady Car still went out to dine, and walked a little about the garden with her husband’s arm; the next she was carried out to her sofa on the lawn. All went so very gradually, so very softly, that no one noted. She was very delicate. When that gets to be fully recognised, there seems no reason why it should not go on for ever; not so happy a state as perfect health, to be sure, but with no reason in it why there should be any further change.

One evening she was out of doors longer than usual—a soft lingering summer night—so warm that even an invalid could get

no harm out of doors. She loved so to see the daylight gradually fade away, and the stars come out above, and over all the wide champaign below a twinkle of little human lights here and there. She took almost a childish pleasure in those lights, thinking as much of the villages and scattered houses—identifying their humanity low down among the billows of the wood or the sweep of the upland slopes—as of the stars above. ‘The greater and the lesser lights,’ she said, and then murmured low to herself, ‘Compensations,’ under her breath.

‘What do you mean by compensations, Carry?’

‘I do not much believe in them,’ she said. ‘Nothing can compensate for what one loses. It is better not. Looking to the east, Edward, see, there are no lights, but only that silvery misty greyness where any glory might lie hidden only we see it not. Now I have come so far as this, I think I like *that* best.’

‘So far as what, Carry?’ Something cold and chill seemed to come over them like a cloud. ‘It is growing chilly, you ought to come indoors, my love.’

‘Yes, presently. I have always been fond of the lights—like a baby; but look the other way. You would say at first there was nothing to be seen at all; but there are all the shades of greyness from one tint to another, and everything lying still, putting out no self-assertion, content to be in God’s hand. And so am I, Edward.’

‘Yes, my love.’

‘Quite content. I have had everything, and—and nothing. The heart of it has always been stolen from me, all the lights put out; but the dark is sweet too; it is only dim, dim, not discernible—don’t call it dark.’

‘Carry! whatever you please, dear.’

‘Edward, do you know what this means—the peace that passeth understanding?’

‘Carry, my darling, you break my heart. No—how should I know?’

‘I think I do,’ she said softly. ‘It lies upon your heart like the dew, yet nothing to bring it, no cause, a thing that is without reason, what you would call irrational altogether—that passeth understanding. Edward, if ever you think afterwards, remember that I told you. I think that I have got it—I wanted other things, but they were not given me. I begin to think that this—is the best,’

'My dearest, let me carry you in; it is getting quite dark and chilly.'

'You are tired of my little sermon, Edward,' she said, with the faint tender smile which he divined rather than saw.

'I—tired? of anything you may say or do! But you must not be longer out in the night air. Come, Carry, let me lift you.'

Whether her mind had begun to wander, or if it was a prevision, or what moved her, no one could ever tell. She resisted a little, putting her hands on his arm. 'You must not forget,' she said, 'to give my love to Tom.'

Beaufort called loudly to her maid, who was waiting. 'It is too late, too late for her to be out! Come and take the cushions,' he said in the sudden panic that had moved him.

'And my little Den,' she said, 'my little Den—they will perhaps as they get older—Edward, I am afraid I feel a little faint.'

He took her in his arms, his heart sinking with a sudden panic and blind terror as if the blackness of darkness was sweeping over him. But they succeeded in getting her to her room and her bed, where she said good-night and kissed him, and dropped sweetly asleep, as they thought—but never woke again. They found her in the morning lying in the same attitude, with the same smile.

Thus Lady Car ended the tragedy which had been going on unseen, unknown to anyone—the profound, unrivalled tragedy of her life. But so sweetly that no one ever knew the tragedy it had been. Her husband understood more or less the failure of her heart over her children—her son—but he never even imagined that it was he himself that had given the first and perhaps the deepest blow; though not the *coup de grâce*, which had been left for Tom.

Poor little Janet was summoned home from the merry house to which she had gone, where there were many entertainments going on. She was roused out of the fatigue of pleasure, out of her morning sleep after the ball, to be told that her mother was dead. They thought the girl's heart would have burst. The cry of 'Mozer, Mozer!' her old child's cry, sounded to those who heard it like something that no consolation could touch. But, to be sure, her tears were dried, like all other tears, after awhile.

At the Sign of the Ship.

THE following heartless case of plagiarism has only to-day come within my knowledge. The criminals are beyond the reach of public opinion, perhaps, though we do not know for certain, for they died some three thousand years ago. But if there is an Amenti, as they probably believed, where the souls of bad Egyptians are devoured by serpents and mocked by monkeys, in that Amenti they should be expiating their offences. The victims of this Egyptian plagiarism are two English novelists who, with admired modesty, did not sign their names to a romance called *He* (Longmans, 1887). In that instructive volume occurs this confession by an Egyptian princess: 'I made the man into a mummy ere yet his living spirit had left him,' the man in question being the magician Jambres. Will it be credited that some Egyptian actually plagiarised this notion (truly original) and acted on it thirty centuries ago? The glaring exposure will be found in the *Academy* (June 1, 1889), where Miss Edwards gives an account of M. Maspero's new book on the Royal Mummies of Deir-el-Bahari. When M. Maspero unrolled these royal dead he found that one of them had been *mummified alive!* 'He was a person of high rank and the victim of some unspeakable tragedy,' says Miss Edwards. No critic can doubt that the whole idea was pilfered, without acknowledgment, by the unscrupulous Egyptian author from the modern work of pure imagination. So little respect for copyright and priority of invention was displayed by the people of ancient Khem. It may be added that Miss Edwards, while recording the facts, does not point out the 'unintended coincidence' (as the partisans of literary theft will style it) with the fiction.

* * *

Why does anybody ever back horses? There is hardly any form of gambling which is not more satisfactory, because in any

other you have a comparatively fair run for your money. You know the odds against you at *roulette*, *baccarat*, *trente et quarante*, or pitch and toss, and you get the odds. But the odds against a horse are practically incalculable, and you don't get them. The animal himself, though noble, is the most uncertain in the world. His health, his spirits, his (or her) affections, all interfere with consistent running. Then he may be 'got at' in countless ways, by countless people, and if, after all, you win, it does *not* follow, as the night the day, that you get paid. These reflections are not novel; indeed they are suggested by Mr. Lawley's pamphlet, *The Bench and the Jockey Club*, but they are mathematically correct. They should be present to the mind of youth, ever anxious to 'plunge,' and, if acted on, they would positively restore the purity of the turf. If nobody betted, nobody would cheat, and 'pull,' and all the rest of it, and nobody would bet if once he let his consciousness play freely around the subject. Mr. Lawley gives amusing examples of racing knavery—of boys who were told that they must on no account finish in the first twelve, of others who were bidden to rap the legs of horses in the stable. 'Where is the jockey whose conscience is utterly void of offence?' asks Mr. Lawley. Where indeed, and where is the politician? Mr. Lawley remarks that, 'with one exception' (a clean hit over the pavilion, probably), 'life has nothing more exciting, nothing sweeter, than the contemplation of a two-year-old race by an owner who, without having a bet on its issue, sees a magnificent colt, which, perhaps, he has himself bred, pulled out for the first time to run in public, and sees him win hands down.' After writing this sentence I find that Mr. Lawley's still better moment has nothing to do with cricket, but with the affections. However, why does not everybody who races aim at the second best, the winning of a race without betting? 'It is so easy not to write a tragedy in five acts,' and it is so easy not to bet! We cannot all hope *not* to be an object of indifference to the first woman we ever loved, because she is usually thirty, while we are twelve; but we can all refrain from betting. Mr. Lawley thinks racing is purer than politics, commerce, the Bar, art, the stage, and even literature, a remark in which I only partially concur. Well, if Mr. Lawley be right, let betting be abandoned, and Astraea will come back to earth, and the golden years return. Nobody says cricket is not as pure as consecrated snow that lies on Dian's lap; and why? Because on cricket there is hardly any betting. The truth is that it is impossible to demon-

strate, without documentary evidence of intention, that a horse has been pulled. Again, there is no horse but will run sometimes as inconsistently as if he had been pulled. So there will always be charges of unfair play, and these charges will always be incapable of proof. Now, at cricket, if a good bat is playing ill, or is unlucky, everyone regrets it, and nobody condemns, because at cricket he has no temptation not to do his best. As long as men bet, so long men will act unfairly sometimes, and be unfairly accused still more frequently. If anybody expects the turf to be pure while betting is its mainspring, I admire his ingenuousness and envy his ignorance of human nature.

* * *

In the following parable, by Miss May Kendall, the author whose book is given away as a bonus on soap must be a popular English author in America; and the writer whose books wrap up the soap must be an American author ruined by English unpaid competition. I think the British genius has rather less to complain of than his American brother, in a land where successful English novels can be, and are, literally given away, 'thrown in' with soap or cheese as inducements to purchase these commodities.

A BONUS ON SOAP.

Alone he stood before the pane,
He let the crowd sweep by ;
But what in City stores could chain
That gifted author's eye ?

"Twas not the jam attracted it,
The salmon, nor the spice.
Above a keg of soap was writ
The following advice :

*'Come hither, nor in darkness grope.
Come hither—buy, peruse—
The Age's most superior soap
And most enlightened views.'*

*'New lustre on each countenance
Touched by this soap you'll find ;
This philosophical romance
Will kindle heart and mind.'*

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

*'Their hands were never half so clean,
All customers agree,
And their beliefs have never been
So utterly at sea.'*

*'To spiritual heights you'll grow
From which you'll ne'er descend.
Such is the Novel we bestow,
The Soap that we commend.'*

*'What higher longing could be mine
That author sighed. 'Enough.
The Higher Life I intertwine
With common household stuff.'*

There dimmed his eye a happy tear :
*'I have not lived amiss,
That I should be so very near
The Nation's heart as this !'*

He turned from that attractive sight,
 And noted, standing by,
 A threadbare and dejected wight,
 Who checked a heavy sigh.

*'Brother,' he said, 'a helping hand
To soothe your grief permit :
Humanity's my watchword, and
You are a part of it.'*

*'A purer faith I might provide
Upon this very spot.'*
 That other pensively replied,
'Thank you ; I'd rather not.'

*'A momentary weakness shook
My spirit, but is gone.
My book wrapped up the soap your book
Was made a bonus on !'*

M. K.

* * *

At the extreme risk of boring the patient reader I venture to print the following fairy tale, sent from the Orkneys by Mr. D.

J. Robertson. It is told, he says, almost in the very words of the original narrator, a woman who was an Orcadian, but had been in service in England. Every reader will recognise a form of Grimm's *Rumpelstilzkin*, and Chambers's *Whuppity Stoorie*. Mr. Clodd, in the last number of the *Folk Lore Journal*, published a Norfolk variety of this fairy tale—a most interesting, lively, and humorous version of rural England. The story was quite as good as the German version, or better, and quite disproves the idea that our English country folk cannot tell a tale well. This Orcadian version has a novel opening, that which generally begins the story of 'East o' the Sun and west o' the Moon.' Note the poverty of queens with their little 'kail-yaird' or cabbage garden. The flaying is, unluckily, an historical trait. The demon, or whoever he is, lives in a 'knowe,' a hillock or tumulus, as the dead Gunnar of Lithend, in the saga of Burnt Njal, lived still and sang within his home, or grave-mound. We need not infer, 'as others use,' that Peerifool was an ancestral spirit. The fate of the Giant is badly *charpenté*, and Peerifool asks no great price, such as the body or soul or child of the lassie, in case she cannot tell him her name. Mr. Robertson has other Orkney stories; perhaps they are more or less Scandinavian in origin as the Norsemen settled the islands. But the older Celtic stories would not die out as long as an old woman of the earlier race was left alive in the land.

PEERIFOOL.

There were once a king and queen in Rousay who had three daughters. The king died and the queen was living in a small house with her daughters. They kept a cow and a kail yard (cabbage garden)—they found their cabbage was all being taken away. The eldest daughter said to the queen, she would take a blanket about her and would sit and watch what was going away with the kail. So when the night came she went out to watch. In a short time a very big giant came into the yard; he began to cut the kail and throw it in a big cubby (creel). So he cut till he had it well filled.

The princess was always asking him why he was taking her mother's kail. He was saying to her, if she was not quiet he would take her too.

As soon as he had filled his cubby he took her by a leg and an arm and threw her on the top of his cubby of kail, and away home he went with her.

When he got home he told her what work she had to do; she

had to milk the cow and put her up to the hills called Bloodfield, and then she had to take wool, and wash and tease it, and comb and card, and spin and make claihth.

When the giant went out she milked the cow and put her to the hills. Then she put on the pot and made porridge to herself. As she was supping it a great many peerie (little) yellow-headed folk came running, calling out to give them some. She said :—

Little for one, and less for two,
And never a grain have I for you.

When she came to work the wool, none of that work could she do at all.

The giant came home at night and found she had not done her work. He took her and began at her head, and peeled the skin off all the way down her back and over her feet. Then he threw her on the couples among the hens. The same adventure befell the second girl.

If her sister could do little with the wool she could do less.

When the giant came home he found her work not done. He began at the crown of her head and peeled a strip of skin all down her back and over her feet, and threw her on the couples beside her sister. They lay there and could not speak nor come down.

The next night the youngest princess said she would take a blanket about her and go to watch what had gone away with her sisters. Ere long, in came a giant with a big cubby, and began to cut the kail.

She was asking why he was taking her mother's kail. He was saying if she was not quiet he would take her too.

He took her by a leg and an arm and threw her on the top of his cubby and carried her away.

Next morning he gave her the same work as he had given her sisters.

When he was gone out she milked the cow and put her to the high hills. Then she put on the pot and made porridge to herself. When the peerie yellow-headed folk came asking for some she told them to get something to sup with. Some got heather cows and some got broken dishes; some got one thing, and some another, and they all got some of her porridge.

After they were all gone a peerie yellow-headed boy came in and asked her if she had any work to do; he could do any work with wool. She said she had plenty, but would never be able to

pay him for it. He said all he was asking for it was to tell him his name. She thought that would be easy to do, and gave him the wool.

When it was getting dark an old woman came in and asked her for lodging.

The princess said she could not give her that, but asked her if she had any news. But the old woman had none, and went away to lie out.

There is a high knowe near the place, and the old woman sat under it for shelter. She found it very warm. She was always climbing up, and when she came to the top she heard someone inside saying, ‘Tease, teasers tease ; card, carders card ; spin, spinners spin, for peerie fool, peerie fool is my name.’ There was a crack in the knowe, and light coming out. She looked in and saw a great many peerie folk working, and a peerie yellow-headed boy running round them calling out that.

The old woman thought she would get lodging if she went to give this news, so she came back and told the princess the whole of it.

The princess went on saying ‘peerie fool, peerie fool’ till the yellow-headed boy came with all the wool made into claih.

He asked what was his name, and she guessed names, and he jumped about and said ‘No.’

At last she said, ‘Peeriefool is your name.’ He threw down the wool and ran off very angry.

As the giant was coming home he met a great many peerie yellow-headed folk, some with their eyes hanging on their cheeks, and some with their tongues hanging on their breasts. He asked them what was the matter. They told him it was working so hard pulling wool so fine. He said he had a good-wife at home, and if she was safe, never would he allow her to do any work again.

When he came home she was all safe, and had a great many webs lying all ready, and he was very kind to her.

Next day when he went out she found her sisters, and took them down from the couples. She put the skin on their backs again, and she put her eldest sister in a cazy (cubby or creel), and put all the fine things she could find with her, and grass on the top.

When the giant came home she asked him to take the cazy to her mother with some food for her cow. He was so pleased with her he would do anything for her, and took it away.

Next day she did the same with her other sister. She told him she would have the last of the food she had to send her mother for the cow ready next night. She told him she was going a bit from home, and would leave it ready for him. She got into the cazy with all the fine things she could find, and covered herself with grass. He took the cazy and carried it to the queen's house. She and her daughters had a big boiler of boiling water ready. They couped it about him when he was under the window, and that was the end of the giant.

* * *

EARLY ONE MORNING.

She goes! she goes!
And no one hears,
And no one knows;
But she fears, she fears.
Her father sleeps; if she only knew,
Her mother weeps, lest a dream come true.
And the morning wears.

She goes! she goes!
Down the echoing stair.
And the white light grows
And is everywhere.
Soon the birds will chirp, and the busy mill
Hum, and the cows go up the hill,
And she not there!

She goes! she goes!
On the window sill
The white cat knows,
But sits on still,
Blinking her yellow eyes in the sun;
The house dog knows, but he'll tell to none,
Since 'tis her will!

She goes! she goes!
The door's unbarred.
How the cock crows
In the neighbour's yard!

She shrinks when she hears the ripe pear fall
On the dew-sodden earth by the garden wall.
All's heard ! all's marred !

No, for she goes,
With a secret smile,
For she knows, she knows
That all the while
Her lover stands where the roads divide,
With a song on his lips and his sword at his side,
And a foot on the stile.

VIOLET HUNT.

* * *

It is a question whether a man may review, or recommend, a book which is dedicated to him. Perhaps if he does openly there is no harm therein ; this sin I have on my own conscience, and I may have it again. Sin or no sin, I venture to say a word about a volume dedicated to myself in Mr. J. Huntly McCarthy's *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, in prose.¹ It seems that there are sixty copies on large paper, and five hundred and fifty on small paper—the latter much the handier for the pocket. May a dedicatee remonstrate with a dedicatory, and ask for a new and larger edition ? The book is printed in capital letters ; the new edition should be in ordinary text, and the translation, I think, should this time be 'a crib or hard and fast literal translation'—literal, that is, as far as the idiom of English permits. I do believe in giving *exactly* what a poet said, and I do believe in ordinary type, which is easy for eyes grown dim with gazing on the books of this world. This is the usual kind of gratitude—expectation of favours to come—but in the meantime Mr. McCarthy's pretty book is in very great favour in the present day. He adds a brief anecdotic bibliography of the poems, and of Fitzgerald's translation. Long ago it was a kind of talisman ; people gave it to other people and bade them hand it on : mine came, I remember, from Mr. J. Addington Symonds. I wonder where it has wandered to in these many years ? Here is a specimen of Mr. McCarthy's rendering : 'Give me a flagon of red wine, a book of verses, a loaf of bread, and a little idleness. If with such store I might sit by thy dear side in some lonely place, I should deem myself happier than a king in his kingdom.'

¹ Nutt.

Here is Fitzgerald's (second edition, 1868):—

Here with a little bread beneath the bough,
A flask of wine, a book of verse, and Thou
Beside me, singing in the wilderness—
Oh ! wilderness were paradise enow !

There is a good deal of Herrick in Omar, a good deal of Burns—

The Kirk and State may gang to hell,
But I'll gang to my Anna—

and a trifle of Marcus Aurelius. But in Fitzgerald there is more than these.

Ah, love, could you and I with fate conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits, and then
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire ?

That is Fitzgerald.

ANDREW LANG.

The 'Donna.'

G. H. Longman 1*l.* Edgar and Maud 1*l.* E. E. E. 5*s.* A. B. 1*l.* and a parcel of old clothes. Anon. an overcoat.

Contributions received after June 10 will be acknowledged in the August number.

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